



New York State Library



The University of the State of New York
The State Education Department
Albany, New York 12230

HV1731
.M42
C857
1987



This material is sent to you
Compliments of

NEW YORK STATE LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND
AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED

Cultural Education Center
Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12230

518/474-5935
800/342-3688

HV1731
N42
C897.
C.3
08/89

AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR THE BLIND
15 WEST 16th STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10011

CULTURAL EDUCATION CENTER
LOCATION & PARKING MAP



New York State Library
Cultural Education Center
The State Education Department
Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York 12230

New York State Library for the Blind
and Visually Handicapped
Cultural Education Center, Empire State Plaza
Albany NY 12230

(518) 474-5935
(800) 342-3688

Dear Educator:

Date:

Thank you for requesting information about the services and materials of the New York State Library for the Blind and Visually Handicapped. In response to your inquiry we are sending you this information packet which describes this library, what the program offers, and how eligible students in your school can receive our services.

Enclosed you will find descriptive material about the library and the application and certification forms which are necessary to register your school with the library. If you wish to have your school participate in this library program after reading about what we provide, please read the section here on How To Register and send us the completed forms. Please call us if you need help.

WHAT IS THE NYS LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND?

We are the Regional Library serving the 55 upstate counties of New York in the national program coordinated by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, a division of the Library of Congress. We offer free library services to eligible people in our service area; we lend books and magazines in braille and on recorded disc and cassette. In addition, we offer reference and reader advisory service, and can refer you to other sources of special format materials and services for the disabled. We publish a quarterly newsletter, and a special newsletter for educators is sent to all registered schools and BOCES.

WHAT DO WE PROVIDE?

The special format books in our collection cover a wide range of interests and consist of fiction and nonfiction similar to the books found in a public library. They are for general recreational and informational use, and do not include textbooks. Many titles are curriculum-related, book report material, and required reading for some courses. We can provide you with information about sources of special format textbooks on request.

We also lend schools special record players and cassette players. This equipment is essential for reading our books because they are not recorded at the same speed as commercial

tapes and discs and the cassettes are on four tracks. Students and schools are eligible to keep our cassette and disc players on loan and use them with discs and tapes from other sources (such as RFB) as long as materials are also borrowed from this library.

HOW TO REGISTER FOR SERVICE

Your school may register to receive our service if you have eligible students enrolled. Students are eligible if they are unable to read standard print in the usual manner because of a physical handicap. This includes those who are blind or visually impaired, physically disabled, and those with a learning or reading disability which has been diagnosed as being physical in origin by an M.D.

To register for service, please complete the enclosed institutional application form (orange) and return it to us. With the school's application you must also submit individual certification for each student who will be using library materials and equipment. You may use the enclosed certification form (which may be duplicated), or you may provide this certification in the form of a letter on school stationery listing the students and signed by an appropriate authority. Further information about eligibility and certifying authorities may be found on the back of the application.

Please note that only an M.D. can certify a student who is eligible because of a reading or learning disability. This is required by federal regulation. We have a publication which further clarifies this. Please request Talking Books and Reading Disabilities if it would be helpful to you.

Please request equipment needed for classroom, resource room, or library media center use. We ask that you schedule the most efficient use of the machines in your school because we often face machine shortages and we want to ensure that all assigned machines are fully used.

The playback equipment will be assigned to the school, not to any individual student. The machines are for use in the school building. If any student wants to have a machine of his or her own, we can establish individual service at the student's home address. To do this it is necessary to complete a separate application form which we will send on request. We recommend this type of service for any student who enjoys books or who needs to be able to read assignments at home.

On page three of the application please tell us which staff member in the school will be our contact-person. All materials will be sent to the school to the attention of this individual, who will be responsible for the coordination of the service there, for the proper use of the equipment and books, and for helping the students use the service.

AFTER REGISTRATION

Once your application and accompanying certifications have been received and approved, your school will be added to our file of registered institutions. We will send you a letter of acknowledgement to let you know that you are registered with the NYS Library for the Blind, and we will also include further information at that time. This will include guidelines for the contact-person on how to use the library, how to get in touch with us, how to order and return books, what to do if machine problems occur, and so on. After this you will receive the requested equipment and accessories, as well as catalogs listing many of the books available for your selection.

This brief information sheet is intended only as an introduction to our services and to help you become a registered school. If you would like further details about our program, assistance in completing the application, or would like to discuss your needs and this program with the School Services Librarian, please get in touch with us.

We hope that the eligible students in your school will enjoy participating in this library service, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,

Cassie B. Hamm
School Services Librarian
New York State Library for the Blind
and Visually Handicapped

NEW YORK STATE LIBRARY F/T BLIND & VISUALLY HANDICAPPED
CULTURAL EDUCATION CENTER / EMPIRE STATE PLAZA
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12230

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Books are available for loan and for sale for children who are blind, visually impaired, physically handicapped, and reading disabled. They are more difficult to find though than standard, print children's books. We hope this guide to special format children's books will help you and your child (grandchild, niece/nephew, special friend) to more and better reading opportunities.

Braille/Print-Braille, Texture, Aroma Books

SCIENCE PRODUCTS

Box A

Southeastern, Pennsylvania 19399

(800) 888-7400

(Books to touch, smell, manipulate, and read)

SEEDLINGS

Braille Books for Children

8447 Marygrove Drive

Detroit, Michigan 48221

(313) 862-7828

(Quality children's literature in braille at moderate prices)

AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND

1839 Frankfort Avenue

Louisville, Kentucky 40206

(502) 895-2405

(Books in special format, toys, games, teaching aids)

JERICO PUBLICATIONS

P.O. Box 24

Alden, New York 14004

(Braille, Print, Aroma Flash Cards)

AMERICAN BROTHERHOOD FOR THE BLIND

18440 Oxnard Street

Tarzana, California 91356

(818) 343-2022

(Twin-Vision children's books)

NATIONAL BRAILLE PRESS
88 St. Stephen Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02115
(617) 266-6160
(Children's Braille Book-of-the-Month Club)

NEW YORK STATE LIBRARY F/T BLIND & VISUALLY HANDICAPPED
Cultural Education Center / Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York 12230
(518) 474-5935 (800) 342-3688
(Large selection Print/Braille children's library books
Preschool-Grade 3 level, Juvenile and YA Braille Books)

Recorded Books for Children and Young Adults

RECORDING FOR THE BLIND
20 Roszel Road
Princeton, New Jersey 08540
(609) 452-0606
(Specializes in taped textbooks, also classics on tape)

EDUCATIONAL TAPE RECORDING FOR THE BLIND
10234 South Kedzie Avenue
Evergreen, Illinois 60642
(312) 499-3666
(Rental service for textbooks on tape, recording service)

AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND
1839 Frankfort Avenue
Louisville, Kentucky 40206
(502) 895-2405
(Textbooks in recorded format)

NEW YORK STATE LIBRARY F/T BLIND & VISUALLY HANDICAPPED
Cultural Education Center / Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York 12230
(518) 474-5935 (800) 342-3688
(Children's and YA books on cassette and disc, cassette and
disc player loaned free of charge also)



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2019 with funding from
American Printing House for the Blind, Inc.

<https://archive.org/details/newyorkstatelibr00unse>

NEW YORK STATE LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND
AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED
Cultural Education Center, Empire State Plaza
Albany NY 12230

(518) 474-5935
(800) 342-3688

MAGAZINES OF INTEREST TO PARENTS
OF HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

The following is a list of magazines written for parents that are concerned with such issues as family relations, early childhood education, child development, and programs and services for handicapped children. Many newsletters and journals of interest to parents are published by organizations that deal with a specific disability. If you have an interest in a particular disability, let us know and we will put you in touch with the appropriate organization. Subscriptions to the magazines listed here are available from the source given with each title, not from us.

Childhood Education

5 issues a year. \$32 a year. Association for Childhood Education International, 3615 Wisconsin Avenue NW, Washington DC 20016.

Articles on child development and education (infancy through adolescence); reviews of books, films, and periodicals; parents' column.

Children Today

Bimonthly. \$14 a year. US Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Human Development Services, Room 356-G, 200 Independence Avenue SW, Washington DC 20201. For sale by Superintendent of Documents, US Government Printing Office.

Articles about children and families, as well as articles for the professional. Regular departments include news and reports from the field; book reviews; and a listing of recent US government publications relating to children.

Children's World

Bimonthly. \$8.50 a year. Children's House Inc., PO Box 111, Caldwell NJ 07006.

Practical articles on Montessori methods of teaching as well as topics in elementary and early childhood education and child development; reviews of books, records, and films.

Exceptional Parent

Bimonthly. \$16 a year. Psy-Ed Corp., 605 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston MA 02215.

Articles emphasizing problem solving at the parent-child level; practical information for families about dealing with a disabled child.

Family Journal

Bimonthly. \$15 a year. Family Journal Co., 1205 University Avenue, Columbia MO 65201.

Offers parents advice and information on all aspects of child rearing; articles cover timely topics such as choosing a summer camp, safe toys, and reviews of children's books and books concerned with parenting.

Future Reflections

Bimonthly. \$3 a year for individuals, \$15 a year for institutions. National Federation of the Blind, Future Reflections, Barbara Cheadle, Editor, 1800 Johnson St., Baltimore, MD 21230.

Advice to parents and information on all aspects of raising visually handicapped children; articles cover subjects such as selecting toys, facts and myths about blindness, attitudes about blindness; reports on current legislation and educational opportunities.

Handicapped Americans Reports

Biweekly. \$154 a year. Capitol Publications Inc., 1300 North 17th Street, Arlington VA 22209.

Current news and reports about federal, state, and local legislation and programs affecting disabled persons.

Parent' Choice

Quarterly. \$10 a year. Diana H. Green, Parents' Choice Foundation, PO Box 185, Waban MA 02168.

Reviews of children's books, television, films, records, toys, games, computer software, and video cassettes.

Programs for the Handicapped

Bimonthly. Free. US Department of Education, Office of Information and Resources for the Handicapped, Clearinghouse on the Handicapped, Room 3119, Switzer Building, Washington DC 20202.

Concise articles covering a variety of current topics with an appropriate bibliography for one article; resource lists; reviews of new publications; announcements of films, awards, conferences, and services.

Young Children

Bimonthly. \$15 a year. National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1834 Connecticut Avenue NW, Washington DC 20009.

Articles about recent research and theory in early childhood education and child development; reviews of books and legislation dealing with education.

New York State Library for the Blind
and Visually Handicapped
Cultural Education Center, Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12230

(518) 474-5935
(800) 342-3688

SOURCES FOR TEXTBOOKS

The New York State Library for the Blind does not have any textbooks in its collection. We do have fiction and non-fiction, some of which is curriculum related and/or required reading for all levels. For textbooks try the following:

New York State Resource Center for the Visually Impaired
Richmond Avenue
Batavia, New York 14020 (716) 343-5384

Lends large print, braille, and recorded textbooks on all grade levels. If your school owns special format textbooks which are no longer needed, these should be shipped to the Resource Center (postage-free) for use by other New York State schools.

Recording for the Blind, Inc.
20 Roszel Road
Princeton, New Jersey 08540 (609) 452-0606

Lends recorded textbooks on four track tape. Will produce textbooks not already in their collection upon request and submission of two print copies of requested title.

American Printing House for the Blind
1839 Frankfort Avenue
Louisville, Kentucky 40206 (502) 895-2405

Maintains a catalog of instructional materials available in special format. Some are available for sale, others for loan, rental, or tape exchange from various organizations throughout the U.S.

Educational Tape Recording for the Blind
10234 South Kedzie Avenue
Evergreen Park, Illinois 60642 (312) 499-3666

Provides a rental service for a fee of \$20.00 per year. Textbooks on primary through college level are available as well as textbook taping service.

Please contact us if you have questions about reading materials needed for school or recreation.

Facts



***National Library Service
for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped***

The Library of Congress

Washington, DC 20542

TALKING BOOKS AND READING DISABILITIES

February 1987

Background

The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), Library of Congress, administers a free national library program for visually and physically handicapped persons who cannot use standard-print library materials. With the cooperation of authors and publishers who grant permission to use copyrighted works without royalty, NLS selects and produces full-length books and magazines on recorded disc and cassette and in braille. Reading materials are distributed to a cooperating network of regional and subregional libraries where they are circulated to eligible borrowers. Special cassette and record players are needed to listen to these books on cassette and disc because they are recorded to play at slower speeds, e.g., 8 1/3 rpm discs and 15/16 ips cassettes. Reading materials and special machines are sent to borrowers and returned to libraries by postage-free mail. The book collections consist of recreational and informational reading for adults and children at all grade levels. Books are selected on the basis of their appeal to a wide range of interests and include bestsellers, biographies, and general fiction.

The NLS collections are recorded primarily for visually or physically disabled adults and children; the narration speed of each book is narrated at a fast pace, without background music or special sound effects. The materials provided are not geared to children or adults with short attention spans or to those who need high interest, low vocabulary books. Textbooks, curriculum-oriented, and remedial reading materials are not included in the NLS book collections.

Public Law 89-522

The NLS program was established by an act of Congress in 1931 to serve blind adults. The program was expanded in 1952 to include blind children and in 1966 by Public Law 89-522 to include individuals with physical impairments that prevent the reading of standard print.

Eligibility of Persons with Reading Disabilities

Public Law 89-522 states that materials will be loaned to readers "certified by competent authority as unable to read normal printed material as a result of physical limitations, under regulations prescribed by the Librarian of Congress for this service." The current federal regulation for this program is set forth in the Federal Register for June 7, 1974, as amended October 2, 1981. Individuals with reading disabilities are not expressly covered by this statute. Under Public Law 89-522, only those whose reading disability is physically based are eligible for the NLS talking-book program. Furthermore, the reading disability must be certified by competent authority, described below, as having a physical basis before applicants are considered eligible for the talking-book program. An individual whose reading disability does not have a physical origin is not eligible.

Applications for service from individuals claiming a reading disability based on a physical handicap must establish the following facts:

1. the reading disability must be of sufficient severity to prevent reading standard printed material in a normal manner,
2. the cause of the disability must be physically based, that is, it must be an organic dysfunction, and
3. the person certifying the application must be medically able to judge whether the disability has a physical or organic basis.

The following groups of individuals are not automatically eligible: Those who are learning disabled, functionally illiterate, or mentally retarded unless there is a specific accompanying visual or physical handicap.

Competent Authority

For most eligible people served by this program, the cause of the inability to read printed material--such as blindness, paralysis, loss of arms or hands, extreme weakness, or palsy--is readily observable. In these cases, professionals in various fields related to health care, education, or rehabilitation are acceptable as certifying authorities. With persons classified as reading disabled, usually only the effect is readily apparent. The cause, when physical, lies within the central nervous system, and, under the existing regulation, this cause can be determined only by competent medical authority.

The signature of a doctor of medicine or doctor of osteopathy is required by federal regulation on the application to certify not only that a reading disability exists and is serious enough to prevent reading standard printed material in a normal manner, but also that the identified condition has a physical basis. Nonorganic factors--such as emotional or environmental causes, intellectual or educational

deficiencies, mental retardation, or other possible nonorganic or nonphysical causes--must be ruled out and cannot be taken into consideration. When certifying applications for service for persons with reading disabilities, certifying medical authorities are encouraged to consult with colleagues in associated disciplines.

Application Procedure

A standard application form and additional information about this free library service may be obtained from any regional or subregional library for the blind and physically handicapped. Individuals may also write to the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20542 for an application form and addresses of cooperating libraries. The completed application, signed by a doctor of medicine or doctor of osteopathy in the case of a reading disability, should be submitted to the cooperating library serving the applicant's geographic area.

Recording for the Blind Program

Recording for the Blind (RFB) is a private organization that lends free recorded textbooks and other educational materials to blind, visually and perceptually handicapped, or learning-disabled borrowers who are eligible under its own policies. Some applicants for NLS service with reading disabilities are already receiving service from RFB, and they expect that the RFB certification will suffice for the NLS talking-book program. However, RFB has its own eligibility criteria for perceptually handicapped persons which differ from the NLS requirements. (RFB has more flexibility in its policies because it is a private, nonprofit voluntary organization; NLS, however, can provide service only to those who meet the federal statutory requirements.)

Detailed information about the RFB program and its availability for reading-disabled persons, and applications for service are available from:

Recording for the Blind, Inc.
20 Roszel Road
Princeton, NJ 08540

(609) 452-0606

RFB does not provide playback equipment to its patrons, and often its clients are referred to NLS network libraries for loan of equipment. NLS cooperating network libraries can loan equipment only to those who: (1) meet the eligibility requirements of the NLS program, which include providing a detailed application, certified as required by NLS regulations, as described above; and (2) will actively borrow and use NLS reading materials. Applicants receiving RFB books who are not eligible for loan of NLS equipment must obtain their own playback

equipment. Suitable equipment with the necessary 15/16 ips and 4-track playback capability for RFB books is available for purchase from a number of sources. Contact the NLS Reference Section for information about such sources. (Reference Section, NLS/BPH, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20542)

Summary

To fulfill the NLS statutory obligations, assure the continuity of this program, honor the agreements which furnish NLS with cost-free copyright permission, and protect the free-matter-for-the-blind-and-handicapped mailing privileges, NLS must ensure conformance with the regulations governing this program. If you have questions about the eligibility and certification of those with reading or learning disabilities, please refer them to:

Chief, Network Division
National Library Service for the
Blind and Physically Handicapped
Library of Congress
Washington, DC 20542

(202) 287-6115

NEW YORK STATE LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND
AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED
Cultural Education Center
Empire State Plaza
Albany NY 12230

(518) 474-5935

(800) 342-3688

The New York State Library for the Blind and Visually Handicapped lends recorded books on records and tapes, playback equipment, print-braille and braille books, and special format magazines to schools with eligible students enrolled and to print-handicapped students.

HOW DO TEACHERS USE THE SERVICES OF THE LIBRARY?

For requesting reading materials by title for students
For help in selecting books appropriate to age and interest
For referral to other State services
For information on sources of special format textbooks
For display materials on the library's service to handicapped people and for teaching about people with disabilities
For aid in setting up a program using talking and braille books appropriate to each student and school

HOW DO LIBRARIANS USE THE SERVICES OF THE LIBRARY?

For a deposit collection of special format books in the school library
For providing a service to teachers who need assistance in acquiring special format books for disabled students
For class presentations about this service

HOW DO ADMINISTRATORS USE THE SERVICES OF THE LIBRARY?

For a resource in fulfilling Individual Education Plans
For referrals to appropriate organizations
For a broad range of information on literature available to the disabled student
For an overview of how to set up a program using talking and braille books in district schools
For informing appropriate personnel of the availability of this special library program

HOW DO PARENTS USE THE SERVICES OF THIS LIBRARY?

For individualized help in selecting reading materials suited to their child's interests, age, and reading level
For information helpful in approaching their child's school about his or her special needs
For intermediary assistance between parent and school
For referral to parent support groups
For referral to helpful related agencies

HOW DO STUDENTS USE THE SERVICES OF THE LIBRARY?

For recreational reading
For required reading in courses such as English literature
For information on how to obtain special format books not
available from the Library for the Blind
For referrals on where to go for reading aids, magazines, job
information, and other special services and materials

OTHERS IN SCHOOLS WHO MAKE USE OF THE SERVICES OF THE LIBRARY

Guidance Counselors
School Nurses
Members of the Committee on Special Education
Learning Disabilities Specialists

**HOW DO ALL CONCERNED WITH EDUCATION USE THE SERVICES OF THE
LIBRARY?**

In the classroom
In the School Library/Media Center
In the Resource Room
With headphones for private listening
With speakers for shared listening
For students with many kinds of visual and physical disabilities
For students temporarily disabled due to accident or illness
For students with physically-based learning or reading
disabilities
For parents and children to share reading
For homework studies
For school reading
For recreational and general informational reading
For curriculum-support materials

FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES CONTACT:

Cassie B. Hamm, School Services Librarian
New York State Library for the Blind and Visually Handicapped
Cultural Education Center, Empire State Plaza
Albany NY 12230

Telephone: (518) 474-5935
Toll Free Message Recording Service: (800) 342-3688

New York State Library for the Blind
and Visually Handicapped
Cultural Education Center, Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12230

(518) 474-5935
(800) 342-3688

SOURCES FOR TEXTBOOKS

The New York State Library for the Blind does not have any textbooks in its collection. We do have fiction and non-fiction, some of which is curriculum related and/or required reading for all levels. For textbooks try the following:

New York State Resource Center for the Visually Impaired
Richmond Avenue
Batavia, New York 14020 (716) 343-5384

Lends large print, braille, and recorded textbooks on all grade levels. If your school owns special format textbooks which are no longer needed, these should be shipped to the Resource Center (postage-free) for use by other New York State schools.

Recording for the Blind, Inc.
20 Roszel Road
Princeton, New Jersey 08540 (609) 452-0606

Lends recorded textbooks on four track tape. Will produce textbooks not already in their collection upon request and submission of two print copies of requested title.

American Printing House for the Blind
1839 Frankfort Avenue
Louisville, Kentucky 40206 (502) 895-2405

Maintains a catalog of instructional materials available in special format. Some are available for sale, others for loan, rental, or tape exchange from various organizations throughout the U.S.

Educational Tape Recording for the Blind
10234 South Kedzie Avenue
Evergreen Park, Illinois 60642 (312) 499-3666

Provides a rental service for a fee of \$20.00 per year. Textbooks on primary through college level are available as well as textbook taping service.

Please contact us if you have questions about reading materials needed for school or recreation.

Facts



***National Library Service
for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped***

The Library of Congress

Washington, DC 20542

TALKING BOOKS AND READING DISABILITIES

February 1987

Background

The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), Library of Congress, administers a free national library program for visually and physically handicapped persons who cannot use standard-print library materials. With the cooperation of authors and publishers who grant permission to use copyrighted works without royalty, NLS selects and produces full-length books and magazines on recorded disc and cassette and in braille. Reading materials are distributed to a cooperating network of regional and subregional libraries where they are circulated to eligible borrowers. Special cassette and record players are needed to listen to these books on cassette and disc because they are recorded to play at slower speeds, e.g., 8 1/3 rpm discs and 15/16 ips cassettes. Reading materials and special machines are sent to borrowers and returned to libraries by postage-free mail. The book collections consist of recreational and informational reading for adults and children at all grade levels. Books are selected on the basis of their appeal to a wide range of interests and include bestsellers, biographies, and general fiction.

The NLS collections are recorded primarily for visually or physically disabled adults and children; the narration speed of each book is narrated at a fast pace, without background music or special sound effects. The materials provided are not geared to children or adults with short attention spans or to those who need high interest, low vocabulary books. Textbooks, curriculum-oriented, and remedial reading materials are not included in the NLS book collections.

Public Law 89-522

The NLS program was established by an act of Congress in 1931 to serve blind adults. The program was expanded in 1952 to include blind children and in 1966 by Public Law 89-522 to include individuals with physical impairments that prevent the reading of standard print.

Eligibility of Persons with Reading Disabilities

Public Law 89-522 states that materials will be loaned to readers "certified by competent authority as unable to read normal printed material as a result of physical limitations, under regulations prescribed by the Librarian of Congress for this service." The current federal regulation for this program is set forth in the Federal Register for June 7, 1974, as amended October 2, 1981. Individuals with reading disabilities are not expressly covered by this statute. Under Public Law 89-522, only those whose reading disability is physically based are eligible for the NLS talking-book program. Furthermore, the reading disability must be certified by competent authority, described below, as having a physical basis before applicants are considered eligible for the talking-book program. An individual whose reading disability does not have a physical origin is not eligible.

Applications for service from individuals claiming a reading disability based on a physical handicap must establish the following facts:

1. the reading disability must be of sufficient severity to prevent reading standard printed material in a normal manner,
2. the cause of the disability must be physically based, that is, it must be an organic dysfunction, and
3. the person certifying the application must be medically able to judge whether the disability has a physical or organic basis.

The following groups of individuals are not automatically eligible: Those who are learning disabled, functionally illiterate, or mentally retarded unless there is a specific accompanying visual or physical handicap.

Competent Authority

For most eligible people served by this program, the cause of the inability to read printed material--such as blindness, paralysis, loss of arms or hands, extreme weakness, or palsy--is readily observable. In these cases, professionals in various fields related to health care, education, or rehabilitation are acceptable as certifying authorities. With persons classified as reading disabled, usually only the effect is readily apparent. The cause, when physical, lies within the central nervous system, and, under the existing regulation, this cause can be determined only by competent medical authority.

The signature of a doctor of medicine or doctor of osteopathy is required by federal regulation on the application to certify not only that a reading disability exists and is serious enough to prevent reading standard printed material in a normal manner, but also that the identified condition has a physical basis. Nonorganic factors--such as emotional or environmental causes, intellectual or educational

deficiencies, mental retardation, or other possible nonorganic or nonphysical causes--must be ruled out and cannot be taken into consideration. When certifying applications for service for persons with reading disabilities, certifying medical authorities are encouraged to consult with colleagues in associated disciplines.

Application Procedure

A standard application form and additional information about this free library service may be obtained from any regional or subregional library for the blind and physically handicapped. Individuals may also write to the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20542 for an application form and addresses of cooperating libraries. The completed application, signed by a doctor of medicine or doctor of osteopathy in the case of a reading disability, should be submitted to the cooperating library serving the applicant's geographic area.

Recording for the Blind Program

Recording for the Blind (RFB) is a private organization that lends free recorded textbooks and other educational materials to blind, visually and perceptually handicapped, or learning-disabled borrowers who are eligible under its own policies. Some applicants for NLS service with reading disabilities are already receiving service from RFB, and they expect that the RFB certification will suffice for the NLS talking-book program. However, RFB has its own eligibility criteria for perceptually handicapped persons which differ from the NLS requirements. (RFB has more flexibility in its policies because it is a private, nonprofit voluntary organization; NLS, however, can provide service only to those who meet the federal statutory requirements.)

Detailed information about the RFB program and its availability for reading-disabled persons, and applications for service are available from:

Recording for the Blind, Inc.
20 Roszel Road
Princeton, NJ 08540

(609) 452-0606

RFB does not provide playback equipment to its patrons, and often its clients are referred to NLS network libraries for loan of equipment. NLS cooperating network libraries can loan equipment only to those who: (1) meet the eligibility requirements of the NLS program, which include providing a detailed application, certified as required by NLS regulations, as described above; and (2) will actively borrow and use NLS reading materials. Applicants receiving RFB books who are not eligible for loan of NLS equipment must obtain their own playback

equipment. Suitable equipment with the necessary 15/16 ips and 4-track playback capability for RFB books is available for purchase from a number of sources. Contact the NLS Reference Section for information about such sources. (Reference Section, NLS/BPH, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20542)

Summary

To fulfill the NLS statutory obligations, assure the continuity of this program, honor the agreements which furnish NLS with cost-free copyright permission, and protect the free-matter-for-the-blind-and-handicapped mailing privileges, NLS must ensure conformance with the regulations governing this program. If you have questions about the eligibility and certification of those with reading or learning disabilities, please refer them to:

Chief, Network Division
National Library Service for the
Blind and Physically Handicapped
Library of Congress
Washington, DC 20542

(202) 287-6115

Parents Guide to the Development of Pre-School Handicapped Children: Resources and Services

*National Library Service
for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped*

*The Library of Congress
Washington, D.C. 20542*

Date **October 1984**

No. **84-5**

INTRODUCTION

Parents of a preschool handicapped child will find in this reference circular a wide range of information to assist them in promoting their child's development in the early years.

The listing of organizations, producers, and distributors is limited to those who offer materials or services at the national level. They should be contacted directly for information about local services and distributors.

The books included in Section III were in print at the time this reference circular was compiled and should be available from local bookstores or directly from the publishers. Prices are subject to frequent change and are shown for comparative purposes only. The books cited may also be available on loan from local public libraries.

CONTENTS

I. Recordings of Stories, Songs, and Learning Activities	1
II. Educational Games, Toys, and Play Equipment	5
III. Books for Parents of Handicapped Children: A Selected Bibliography	9
IV. Magazines of Interest to Parents of Handicapped Children	12
V. National Organizations Concerned with Handicapped Children	15

I. RECORDINGS OF STORIES, SONGS, AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Catalogs or descriptive material may be requested from the sources indicated.

Audio Book Contractors
P.O. Box 40115
Washington, DC 20016

Favorite stories and fairy tales for young children.

Caedmon
1995 Broadway
New York, NY 10023
(800) 223-0420 (all states)
(212) 580-3400 (New York state call collect)

Stories to develop listening skills; fairy tales; popular stories; songs and poems for very young children.

Children's Book and Music Center
2500 Santa Monica Boulevard
Santa Monica, CA 90404
(213) 829-0215

Creative play activities; nursery rhymes; folksongs; bedtime songs.

CMS Records, Inc.
226 Washington Street
Mount Vernon, NY 10553
(914) 667-6200

Learning activities; musical games; fingerplays; rhymes and rhythms; popular songs; poems; and stories.

Dimension 5
P.O. Box 185
Kingsbridge Station
Bronx, NY 10463

Development of body movement through music and rhythmic activities.

Educational Activities

P.O. Box 392

Freeport, NY 11520

(516) 223-4666 (New York)

(800) 645-3739 (all other states, except Alaska and Hawaii)

Activity songs; nursery rhymes; songs and rhythm games for motor development; nature activities; bedtime stories.

Folkways Records

632 Broadway

New York, NY 10012

(212) 777-6606

Folk music; rhythm activities; nursery rhymes; sing-alongs; activities to develop skills with numbers, letters, and animal names.

Kimbo Educational

Shoreline Recordings

P.O. Box 477, 10 N. Third Avenue

Long Branch, NJ 07740

(201) 229-4949 (New Jersey)

(800) 631-2187 (all other states)

Activity songs to develop listening, perceptual, and motor skills; creative movement exercises and rhythm activities; sing-alongs to develop concepts of color and numbers; activities and exercise for physical fitness.

Pacific Cascade Records

47534 McKenzie Highway

Vida, OR 97488

(503) 896-3290

Sing-alongs; activity songs for motor and language development, body awareness, auditory response, and social behavior; nursery rhymes; holiday songs.

Pathways of Sound, Inc.

6 Craigie Circle

Cambridge, MA 02138

Folk tales and nursery rhymes.

Peter Pan Industries
145 Komorn Street
Newark, NJ 07105
(201) 344-4214

Nursery rhymes; folktales; activity songs and games for learning the alphabet and numbers; favorite songs for young children.

Random House
School Division
400 Hahn Road
Westminster, MD 21157
(301) 876-2286 (all states, including Alaska and Hawaii call collect)
(800) 492-0782 (Maryland)

Popular children's stories; folk and fairy tales.

Rhythms Productions
Cheviot Corp.
Whitney Building
P.O. Box 34485
Los Angeles, CA 90034

Rhythm and activity songs for self-concept development; action and game songs for special holidays and indoor play.

Sesame Street Records
One Lincoln Plaza
New York, NY 10023
(212) 874-2700

Sing and play introduction to the alphabet; dancing; fairy tales with cast favorites from the TV show; bedtime stories; sing-alongs to learn letters, numbers, and music; fairy tales.

Spoken Arts, Inc.
Dept. E
P.O. Box 289
New Rochelle, NY 10802
(914) 636-5482

Nursery rhymes; animal stories; fables and folktales; young children's favorite songs and holiday stories.

Walt Disney Educational Media Company
500 South Buena Vista Street
Burbank, CA 91521

(213) 840-1726 (California, Alaska, and Hawaii call collect)
(800) 423-2555 (all other states)

Folk and fairy tales; controlled vocabulary stories for language development.

Weston Woods Studios
Weston, CT 06883

(203) 226-3355 (Connecticut call collect)
(800) 243-5020 (all other states)

· Holiday and bedtime stories; popular picture books; fairy tales.

II. EDUCATIONAL GAMES, TOYS, AND PLAY EQUIPMENT

Catalogs or descriptive material may be requested from the sources indicated.

Educational Games, Toys, and Play Equipment Designed for Use by Handicapped Children

American Foundation for the Blind
15 West 16th Street
New York, NY 10011
(212) 620-2000

Touch puzzles with high-contrast colors and textures to teach concepts of basic shapes while developing motor skills; multicolored foam letters and numbers for visually impaired children.

American Printing House for the Blind
1839 Frankfort Avenue
P.O. Box 6085
Louisville, KY 40206

Various games and toys for development in visually impaired children of fine motor skills, tactile and auditory discrimination, and number and language concepts.

Play Learn
PCA Industries, Inc.
2298 Grissom Drive
St. Louis, MO 63146
(314) 567-6277 (Missouri)
(800) 325-4794 (all other states)

Playground equipment and adaptive equipment for handicapped children--swing platforms for wheelchairs, wheel-through gyms, safety slides and climbers, and wheelchair picnic/work tables.

Rifton Equipment for the Handicapped
Route 213
Rifton, NY 12471
(914) 658-3141

Therapeutic equipment for young handicapped children; varied types of safety chairs, feeding trays, walkers and standers, adjustable tables, adaptive easels, scooter boards, supine boards, hand-driven tricycles, and therapy swings.

Science Products

Box A

Southeastern, PA 19399

(800) 222-2148 (Pennsylvania)

(800) 233-3121 (all other states)

Alphabet and nursery rhyme books; scratch and sniff books and puzzles; touch and feel books with moving parts and touch activities; read-along stories on cassette with background music and special effects for visually impaired children.

Educational Games, Toys, and Play Equipment Suitable for Use by Handicapped Children

Beckley-Cardy Co.

114 Gaither Drive

Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054

(216) 234-8833

Various games, toys, books, craft activities, and educational kits for development of motor and language skills, social and self-help skills, and perception concepts.

Bowmar, Inc.

P.O. Box 25308

Oklahoma City, OK 73125

(405) 528-8444 (Oklahoma call collect)

(800) 654-8608 (all other states)

Tape programs to help young children develop oral comprehension, skills for speech improvement, and reading readiness; story-poems describing plants and animals, and adventure story books.

Childcraft Education Corp.

20 Kilmer Road

Edison, NJ 08818

Various games, toys, books, craft activities, and educational kits for development of motor and language skills, social and self-help skills, and perception concepts.

Community Playthings
Route 213
Rifton, NY 12471
(914) 658-3141

Steel gym equipment, climbers, see-saws, slides, and panel gyms for improving motor development; hand puppets for dramatic play; block dominoes to create interest in numbers and letters.

Constructive Playthings
2008 West 103d Terrace
Leawood, KS 66206
(913) 642-8244 Kansas
(800) 255-6124 (all other states)

Playground equipment for pre-schoolers--slides, climbing gyms, spring horses, and crawl tubes; toys for sand and water play.

Developmental Learning Materials
P.O. Box 4000
Allen, TX 75002
(800) 442-4711 (Texas)
(800) 527-4747 (all other states)

Pegboards for teaching numbers, letters, colors, shapes, sizes, and other perception skills; building blocks and interlocking toys; wooden block play figures; simple puzzles.

Educational Teaching Aids
159 W. Kinzie Street
Chicago, IL 60610
(312) 559-1400

Various games, toys, books, craft activities, and educational kits for development of motor and language skills, social and self-help skills, and perception concepts.

Fisher-Price Toys
East Aurora, NY 14052

Activity games to develop social skills; alphabet boards; puzzles to develop vocabulary; popular picture books for pre-school children.

Ideal School Supply Company
11000 South Laverne Avenue
Oak Lawn, IL 60453
(312) 425-0800

Various games, toys, books, craft activities, and educational kits for development of motor and language skills, social and self-help skills, and perception concepts.

Lakeshore Curriculum Materials Co.
2695 E. Dominguez Street
P.O. Box 6261
Carson, CA 90749
(213) 537-8600 (California call collect)
(714) 551-8182 (California call collect)
(800) 421-5354 (all other states)

Learning boards for counting, letters, shapes, colors, answers to everyday questions, listening skills and following directions, and vocabulary development.

Playskool
4501 W. Augusta Boulevard
Chicago, IL 60651
(312) 276-6700

Various games, toys, books, craft activities, and educational kits for development of motor and language skills, social and self-help skills, and perception concepts.

Western Publishing Company, Inc.
1220 Mound Avenue
Racine, WI 53404
(414) 633-2431

Various games, toys, books, craft activities, and educational kits for development of motor and language skills, social and self-help skills, and perception concepts.

III. BOOKS FOR PARENTS OF HANDICAPPED CHILDREN: A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Burt, Kent Garland, and Karen Kalkstein. Smart toys: for babies from birth to two. New York: Harper and Row, 1981. 166p. \$8.95.

Caldwell, Bettye, and Donald Stedman, eds. Infant education: a guide for helping handicapped children in the first three years. New York: Walker, 1977. 167p. \$8.95.

Caston, Don. Easy to make aids for your handicapped child: a guide for parents and teachers. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1982. 144p. \$6.95.

Cunningham, Cliff, and Patricia Sloper. Helping your exceptional baby: a practical and honest approach to raising a mentally handicapped child. New York: Pantheon, 1980. 335p. \$12.95.

Featherstone, Helen. A difference in the family: living with a disabled child. New York: Penguin, 1981. 288p. \$5.95.

Ferrell, Kay Alicyn. Parenting preschoolers: suggestions for raising young blind and visually impaired children. New York: American Foundation for the Blind, 1984. (unpaged). Single copy free.

Freeman, Roger D., Clifton F. Carbin, and Robert J. Boese. Can't your child hear? Baltimore: University Park Press, 1981. 340p. \$16.95.

Froman, Katherine. The chance to grow. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1983. 240p. \$13.95.

Hanson, Marci J. Teaching your Down's Syndrome infant: a guide for parents. Baltimore: University Park Press, 1978. 221p. \$16.95.

Honig, Alice S. Playtime learning games for young children. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1983. 128p. \$9.95.

Kastein, Shulamith, Isabelle Spaulding, and Battia Scharf. Raising the young blind child: a guide for parents and educators. New York: Human Sciences Press, 1979. 224p. \$19.95.

McArthur, Shirley. Raising your hearing-impaired child: a guide for parents. Washington: Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf, 1982. 256p. \$10.95.

McConkey, Roy, and Dorothy Jeffree. Making toys for handicapped children: a guide for parents and teachers. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1983. 208p. \$7.95.

Maloney, Patricia L. Practical guidance for parents of the visually handicapped preschooler. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 1981. 88p. \$10.95.

Mather, Jane. Learning can be child's play: how parents can help slower-than-average preschool children to development through play experiences. Nashville, TN: Abingdon. 1976. 64p. \$3.95.

Miller, Alfred L. Hearing loss, hearing aids, and your child: a guide for parents. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 1980. 194p. \$7.50.

Nousanen, Diane, and Lee W. Robinson. Take charge: a guide to resources for parents of the visually impaired. Austin, TX: National Association for Parents of the Visually Handicapped, 1980. 94p. \$5.50. (P.O. Box 180806, 78718).

Paluszny, Maria J. Autism: a practical guide for parents and professionals. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1980. 200p. \$9.95.

Prensky, Arthur L., and Helen S. Pulkes. Care of the neurologically handicapped child: a book for parents and professionals. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982. 331p. \$24.95.

Russell, L. Mark. Alternatives: a family guide to legal and financial planning for the disabled. Evanston, IL: First Publications, 1983. 194p. \$11.95. (P.O. Box 1832, 60204).

Schleichkorn, Jay. Coping with cerebral palsy: answers to questions parents often ask. Baltimore: University Park Press, 1983. 184p. \$16.95.

Scott, Eileen P., James E. Jan, and Roger D. Freeman. Can't your child see?
Baltimore: University Park Press, 1977. 20lp. \$8.95.

Tingey-Michaelis, Carol. Handicapped infants and children: a handbook for
parents and professionals. Baltimore: University Park Press, 1983. 224p.
\$14.95.

IV. MAGAZINES OF INTEREST TO PARENTS OF HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

This section includes a list of magazines written for parents that are concerned with such issues as family relations, early childhood education, child development, and programs and services for handicapped children. A separate listing describes magazines which are intended for use by or with preschool children. Many newsletters and journals of interest to parents are published by organizations that deal with a specific disability. These titles are listed under the name of the organization in Section V. Subscriptions to the magazines listed in this section are available from the source given with each title.

Magazines for Parents

Childhood education. 5 issues/year. \$32/year. Association for Childhood Education International, 3615 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20016.

Articles on child development and education (infancy through adolescence); reviews of books, films, and periodicals; parents' column.

Children today. Bimonthly. \$14/year. U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Office of Human Development Services, Room 356-G, 200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20201. For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. Govt. Print. Off.

Articles about children and families, as well as articles for the professional. Regular departments include news and reports from the field; book reviews; and a listing of recent U.S. government publications related to children.

Children's world. Bimonthly. \$8.50/year. Children's House, Inc., P.O. Box 111, Caldwell, NJ 07006.

Practical articles on Montessori methods of teaching as well as topics in elementary and early childhood education and child development; reviews of books, records, and films.

Exceptional parent. Bimonthly. \$16/year. Psy-Ed Corp., 605 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215.

Articles emphasize problem solving at the parent-child level; practical information for families about dealing with a disabled child.

Family journal. Bimonthly. \$15/year. Family Journal Magazine Co.,
1205 University Avenue, Columbia, MO 65201.

Offers parents advice and information on all aspects of child rearing; articles cover timely topics such as choosing a summer camp, safe toys, and reviews of children's books and books concerned with parenting.

Future reflections. Bimonthly. \$3/year for individuals, \$15/year for institutions. National Federation of the Blind, Future Reflections, Barbara Cheadle, editor, P.O. Box 1947, Boise, ID 83701.

Advice to parents and information on all aspects of raising visually handicapped children; articles cover subjects such as selecting toys, facts and myths about blindness, attitudes about blindness; reports on current legislation and educational opportunities.

Handicapped Americans reports. Biweekly. \$154/year. Capitol Publications, Inc., 1300 North 17th Street, Arlington, VA 22209.

Current news and reports about federal, state, and local legislation and programs affecting disabled persons.

Parents' choice. Quarterly. \$10/year. Diana H. Green, Parents' Choice Foundation, P.O. Box 185, Waban, MA 02168.

Reviews of children's books, television, movies, records, toys, games, computer software, and video cassettes.

Programs for the handicapped. Bimonthly. Free. U.S. Dept. of Education, Office of Information and Resources for the Handicapped, Clearinghouse on the Handicapped, Room 3119, Switzer Building, Washington, DC 20202.

Concise articles covering a variety of current topics with an appropriate bibliography for one article; resource lists; reviews of new publications; announcements of films, awards, conferences, and services.

Young children. Bimonthly. \$15/year. National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1834 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20009.

Articles about recent research and theory in early childhood education and child development; reviews of books and legislation dealing with education.

Magazines for Children

Chicadee. 10 issues/year. \$12/year. Young Naturalist Foundation, 59 Front Street E., Toronto, Ontario M5E 1B3 CANADA.

Animal stories, articles, games, and puzzles for preschool children.

Sesame Street. 10 issues/year. \$8.95/year. Children's Television Workshop, 1 Lincoln Plaza, New York, NY 10023.

Activities to help a child interpret pictures, draw, recognize letters and numbers; suggested activities designed for ages 3 to 5 (with parental guidance); includes a section for parents.

Turtle: magazine for preschool kids. 9 issues/year. \$10.95/year. 1100 Waterway Boulevard, P.O. Box 567, Indianapolis, IN 46206.

Bedtime stories; color-ins, simple puzzles, and illustrated riddles for children ages 2 to 5.

Your big backyard. Monthly. \$8.95/year. National Wildlife Federation, 8925 Leesburg Pike, Vienna, VA 22180. (Two-part series; each part published as an annual for two years; printed on a repeating cycle).

Color photos of animals, nature topics, and outdoor life; simple crafts, stories, and poems for children ages 3 through 5.

V. NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS CONCERNED WITH HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf
3417 Volta Place, N.W.
Washington, DC 20007
(202) 337-5220 (voice and TTY)

Promotes the teaching of speech, lipreading, and the use of residual hearing. Provides information about educational programs, career development, signaling devices, and general resources; offers educational scholarships for oral deaf students. A lending library contains publications on speech and deafness; books may be borrowed by mail. Publishes text and reference books, manuals, and audio-visual materials on topics of current concern in the field of deafness.

Principal publications: Volta Review, 6/year and one single topic monograph. Research and current perspectives from specialists in education, audiology, speech and language sciences, and psychology.

Newsounds, 10/year. An update on legislation, technology, job listings, and continuing education opportunities.

American Council of the Blind Parents
Route A, Box 78
Franklin, LA 70538
(318) 836-9780

Provides opportunities among members for sharing information and experiences in parent-child relations; keeps current with legislation and technology. Membership is open to sighted and blind parents of visually impaired children and to professionals who work with the visually impaired.

Principal publication: Newsletter, quarterly. Brief items on legislation, technology, parent-child relations, and child development.

American Foundation for the Blind
15 West 16th Street
New York, NY 10011
(212) 620-2000

Serves as a national clearinghouse for information about blindness; promotes the development of educational, rehabilitation, and social welfare services for blind children and adults; conducts research to determine effective methods of serving visually impaired persons;

provides consultation to governmental and voluntary organizations about blindness. Operates a reference library about blindness. Sells aids and appliances to blind persons.

Principal publication: Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness, 10/year. Research articles and technology reports for professional practitioners and researchers who work with blind and visually impaired persons.

American Printing House for the Blind
1839 Frankfort Avenue
P.O. Box 6085
Louisville, KY 40206
(502) 895-2405

Sells braille, recorded, and large type books and educational aids for pre-school visually impaired children; conducts research in specific problems relating to the selection and preparation of educational aids.

Principal publications: Catalogs of braille, recorded, large type books, and educational aids.

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
10801 Rockville Pike
Rockville, MD 20852
(301) 897-5700 (voice and TTY)

Promotes investigation of clinical procedures used in treating disorders of communication, basic research and scientific study of human communication and its disorders, development of comprehensive clinical service programs. Sets standards of clinical competence for professionals providing services to the public.

Principal publications: Asha, monthly. Research findings; general articles of interest to professionals who work in the field of communication disorders.

Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders, quarterly. Articles about current research in specific disorders of communication.

Association for the Care of Children's Health
3615 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20016
(202) 244-1801

Promotes the health of children and their families in all health care settings by publishing information pamphlets and sponsoring parent support groups and advocacy centers. Offers referral services to other agencies and organizations that serve chronically ill and disabled children.

Principal publication: Children's Health Care, quarterly. Articles about current research in medicine; book reviews of pediatric and medical books.

Association for Children and Adults
with Learning Disabilities
4156 Library Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15234
(415) 341-1515

Provides information and referral services about learning disabilities to the general public and parents; encourages research in neuro-physiology and psychological aspects of learning disabilities; develops and promotes legislative assistance; encourages improvement in education.

Principal publication: Newsbriefs, bimonthly. Articles about current developments in the field of learning disabilities.

Association for the Severely Handicapped
7010 Roosevelt Way, N.E.
Seattle, WA 98115
(206) 523-8446

Advocates comprehensive, high quality education and rehabilitation services; disseminates research findings and practical applications for education and rehabilitation; encourages effective use of experience and expertise towards quality education and services for persons with severely handicapping conditions.

Principal publications: TASH Journal, quarterly. Research reports; descriptions of case studies; practical applications of instructional procedures.

Newsletter, monthly. News of conferences, workshops, and training programs; reviews of new publications and resources; notices of professional positions available.

Closer Look

Parents' Campaign for Handicapped Children and Youth
1201 16th Street, N.W. Suite 233
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 822-7900

Provides information about handicapping conditions; aids parents in understanding the special child's needs and in locating appropriate services; offers technical assistance to groups planning information and referral services for handicapped children and youth; offers training programs for parents in a variety of areas. Publishes booklets and other materials with practical advice to families for coping with birth-to-adulthood needs of handicapped children.

Cystic Fibrosis Foundation
6000 Executive Boulevard Suite 309
Rockville, MD 20852
(301) 881-9130

Funds research into the cause and prevention of cystic fibrosis by individual scientists and cooperative investigations involving several researchers focusing on a particular topic; sponsors conferences to identify areas requiring further research; encourages research on lung diseases.

Down's Syndrome Congress
1640 West Roosevelt Road
Chicago, IL 60608
(312) 226-0416

Clearinghouse for information about Down's Syndrome. Advises parents in finding solutions to their special needs and coordinates parent activities; encourages various research activities related to Down's Syndrome; advocates civil rights for persons with this disability.

Principal publication: Down's Syndrome News, monthly. Articles about the syndrome; reports of current research.

International Association of Parents of the Deaf
814 Thayer Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 585-5400 (voice and TTY)

Provides information and support to families with children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Maintains a resource library concerned with legislation, family relationships, education, technology, and any other topics relevant to families of deaf children.

Principal publication: The Endeavor, 6/year. Articles and information about all aspects of deafness, with emphasis on children.

International Institute for Visually Impaired, 0-7, Inc.
1975 Rutgers Circle
East Lansing, MI 48823
(517) 332-2666

An information center for teachers, parents, and others concerned with the development and education of visually impaired preschool children; offers consultant services and workshops.

Principal publications: VIP Newsletter, quarterly. Practical advice for parents; articles on developmental skills, mobility, and education.

March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation
1275 Mamaroneck Avenue
White Plains, NY 10605
(914) 428-7100

Supports programs of scientific research, medical service, and public and professional health education aimed at treatment and prevention of birth defects. Publishes public health education materials and supports volunteer programs in local clinics and public education.

Principal publications: Maternal/Newborn Advocate, quarterly. Brief reports and articles concerned with maternal and neonatal care.

The Volunteer, quarterly. Reports of interest to local volunteer chapters.

Muscular Dystrophy Association
810 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10019
(212) 586-0808

Funds research into causes and prevention of muscular dystrophy; supports patients and their families through community services; supports clinics that provide diagnostic services and therapeutic and rehabilitative care. Produces publications for professionals in the field; supports a public education program.

Principal publication: MDA News, bimonthly. Articles related to muscular dystrophy; research reports; conference news.

National Association for Parents of the Visually
Impaired, Inc.
P.O. Box 180806
Austin, TX 78718
(512) 459-6651

Provides support services to parents of children with all ranges of visual loss; provides information through workshops and publications to help parents meet the special needs of a visually impaired child; encourages communication and coordination of services among federal, state, and local agencies involved with visually impaired persons.

Principal publication: Awareness, quarterly. Practical advice and guidance for parents; announcements of new products and services.

National Easter Seal Society
2023 West Ogden Avenue
Chicago, IL 60612
(312) 243-8400
(213) 243-8880 (TDD)

Disseminates information and educational materials about disabilities; supports research into causes, prevention, and treatment of handicapping conditions; encourages advocacy efforts to ensure the rights of disabled people.

Principal publication: Rehabilitation Literature, monthly. Articles about rehabilitation and medical issues; book and journal article reviews; reports on research findings.

National Federation of the Blind
Parents of Blind Children Division
1800 Johnson Street
Baltimore, MD 21230
(301) 659-9314

Provides information and support to parents of blind children; serves as a forum where parents can share experiences in raising blind children; promotes opportunity and equality for blind children at home and in society.

Principal publication: Future Reflections, bimonthly. (see entry page 13).

National Information Center for Handicapped
Children and Youth
P.O. Box 1492
Washington, DC 20013

Provides information on specific disabling conditions, direct services for children, parent support groups, sources of teaching materials and financial aid, careers in special education. Offers referral to other government and private agencies that serve handicapped children and youth.

National Society for Children and Adults with Autism
1234 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. Suite 1017
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 783-0125

Disseminates information about autism to parents, the general public, and professionals who are interested in the care, education, and welfare of children and adults with severe communication and behavior disorders.

Principal publication: Advocate, bimonthly. Reviews of current publications; reports of professional meetings and legislative activity.

Orton Dyslexia Society
724 York Road
Baltimore, MD 21204
(301) 296-0232

Provides information and publications about dyslexia to parents and professional persons; promotes research into the study, treatment, and prevention of dyslexia.

Principal publications: Annals of Dyslexia, annual. Articles about current research and treatment procedures.

Perspectives, quarterly. Articles on current research; notices of conferences.

Spina Bifida Association of America
343 South Dearborn Street
Chicago, IL 60604
(312) 663-1562 (Illinois)
(800) 624-3141 (all other states)

Provides information about current research, legislation, and resources that give support to families and individuals with spina bifida; funds research, improvement of medical devices, and treatment facilities; encourages training of professionals dealing with care and treatment. Produces publications concerned with spina bifida for the general public and health professionals.

Principal publication: Insights, bimonthly. News of local chapter activities.

Trace Research and Development Center for the Severely
Communicatively Handicapped
314 Waisman Center
1500 Highland Avenue
Madison, WI 53706
(608) 262-6966

Fosters research, development, and dissemination of practical aids and strategies for communication and computer access for severely communicatively handicapped persons.

Principal publication: Communication Outlook, quarterly. Brief descriptions of aids, projects, and programs; international in scope.

United Cerebral Palsy Associations, Inc.
66 East 34th Street
New York, NY 10016
(212) 481-6300

Disseminates information about cerebral palsy; funds and stimulates research into causes and prevention of this disease; develops services and articulates positions on issues of national concern to families of individuals with cerebral palsy.

Principal publication: UC People, bimonthly. Reports on research findings; legislation updates; news of conferences and activities of local chapters.

Compiled by:
Merrilyn Gibson
January 1984

Additional copies of this reference circular or any of the reference circulars listed below are available free on request from:

Reference Section
National Library Service for the Blind
and Physically Handicapped
Library of Congress
Washington, D.C. 20542

REFERENCE CIRCULARS

Becoming a Volunteer: Resources for Individuals, Libraries, and Organizations, 1981

Bibles and Other Scriptures in Special Media, 1983

Braille Instruction and Writing Equipment, 1982

Building a Library Collection on Blindness and Physical Handicaps: Basic Materials and Resources, 1981

Guide to Spoken-Word Recordings: Educational, Professional, and Self-Development Materials, 1983

Guide to Spoken-Word Recordings: Foreign Language Literature and Instruction, 1982

Guide to Spoken-Word Recordings: General Nonfiction, 1983

Guide to Spoken-Word Recordings: Literature, 1982

Information for Handicapped Travelers, 1982

National Organizations Concerned with Visually and Physically Handicapped Persons, 1983

Reading Materials in Large Type, 1983

Reading, Writing, and Other Communication Aids for Visually and Physically Handicapped Persons, 1981

Reference Books in Special Media, 1982

Sports, Games, and Outdoor Recreation for Handicapped Persons, 1983

BIBLIOGRAPHIES

A series of bibliographies is also published by the Reference Section. The following titles are available free on request:

Accessibility: Designing Buildings for the Needs of Handicapped Persons, 1983

Attitudes toward Handicapped People, Past and Present, 1980

Braille: History and Recent Developments, 1982

Closed Circuit Television Reading Devices for the Visually Handicapped, 1980

Gardening for Handicapped and Elderly Persons, 1981

Library and Information Services to Handicapped Persons, 1983

Mobility and Mobility Aids for Visually Handicapped Individuals, 1984

Reading Machines for the Blind, 1980



**Application for Free Library Service
Institutions**

*National Library Service
for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped*

RETURN TO:

New York State Library for
the Blind and Visually Handicapped
Cultural Education Center
Albany, NY 12230

tele.: 518-474-5935 or
800-342-3688 (toll free)

Notice: Records relating to recipients of Library of Congress reading material are confidential except for those portions defined by local law as public information. To find out the extent to which the information provided on this application form may be released to

other individuals, institutions, or agencies, consult the agency to which you are submitting this application. If you do not know that address, send the completed application to the Library of Congress. It will be forwarded to the appropriate agency.

Please Print or Type

Name of Institution

Telephone

Street Address

City

County

State

ZIP

Number of persons unable to read or use standard printed material who will be served:

Talking-book readers _____

Braille readers _____

Please state type of facility: _____

Please give capacity of facility: _____

Name, title of person coordinating this service:

Over

Equipment

You may borrow braille and talking books with any of the following playback equipment and special attachments. Indicate the quantity needed for each item checked:

		Quantity
☐ Talking-book phonograph	Plays 8 rpm, 16 rpm, and 33 rpm discs.	_____
☐ Cassette player	Plays 1-7/8 ips and 15/16 ips, 2-track and 4-track cassettes.	_____
☐ Plastic tone arm clip	Assists in placing tone arm on record. Helpful to readers with limited use of their hands. For talking-book phonograph only.	_____
☐ Headphones	For private listening. May also assist readers with impaired hearing. For talking-book phonograph or cassette player.	_____
☐ Amplifier	Special booster for use with headphones by hearing impaired persons. Not to be used by persons with normal hearing. For talking-book phonograph or cassette player. <i>Special certification is required.</i>	_____
☐ Pillowphone	Solely for readers confined to bed. For talking-book phonograph or cassette player.	_____

Playback equipment and special attachments are supplied to eligible institutions on extended loan. If this equipment is not being used in conjunction with recorded reading

material provided by the Library of Congress and its cooperating libraries, it must be returned to the issuing agency.

- ☐ Extension lever for cassette player - assists readers who have limited use of their hands.
- _____

Eligibility of Blind and Other Physically Handicapped Persons for Loan of Library Materials

A. The following persons are eligible for loan service:

1. Blind persons whose visual acuity, as determined by competent authority, is 20/200 or less in the better eye with correcting lenses, or whose widest diameter of visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees.
2. Other physically handicapped persons as follows:
 - (a) Persons whose visual disability, with correction and regardless of optical measurement, is certified by competent authority as preventing the reading of standard printed material.
 - (b) Persons certified by competent authority as unable to read or unable to use standard printed material as a result of physical limitations.
 - (c) Persons certified by competent authority as having a reading disability resulting from organic dysfunction and of sufficient severity to prevent their reading

printed material in a normal manner.

- B. In cases of blindness, visual disability, or physical limitations, "competent authority" is defined to include doctors of medicine; doctors of osteopathy; ophthalmologists; optometrists; registered nurses; therapists; professional staff of hospitals, institutions, and public or welfare agencies (e.g., social workers, case workers, counselors, rehabilitation teachers, and superintendents). In the absence of any of these, certification may be made by professional librarians or by any person whose competence under specific circumstances is acceptable to the Library of Congress.
- C. In the case of reading disability from organic dysfunction, competent authority is defined as doctors of medicine who may consult with colleagues in associated disciplines.
- D. Qualified readers must be residents of the United States, including the several states, territories, insular possessions, and the District of Columbia, or American citizens, domiciled abroad.

Lending of Materials and Classes of Borrowers

A. **Veterans.** In the lending of books, recordings, reproducers, musical scores, instructional texts, and other specialized materials, preference shall be given at all times to the needs of the blind and other physically handicapped persons who have been honorably discharged from the armed forces of the United States.

B. **Institutions.** The reading materials and sound reproducers for the use of blind and physically handicapped persons

may be loaned to individuals who qualify, to institutions such as nursing homes and hospitals, and to schools for the blind or physically handicapped for the use of such persons only. The reading materials and sound reproducers may also be used in public or private schools where handicapped students are enrolled; however, the students in public or private schools must be certified as eligible on an individual basis and must be the direct and only recipients of the materials and equipment.

To Be Completed by Certifying Authority Please Print or Type

I certify that the institution named
serves persons who are unable to
read or use standard printed
material because of blindness,
visual disabilities, or physical

limitations. I further certify that the
reading materials and equipment
borrowed will be used by such
persons only.

Name

Date

Title and Occupation

Street Address

Telephone

City

State

ZIP

Signature

Eligible Applicants

NOTE: Public or private schools
with eligible students enrolled
must submit individual certifi-
cation for each student who will
be using this service. Certifi-
cation forms are provided upon
request, or schools may write on

official stationery naming the
students and their disabilities.
Certification is to be made by a
physician (MD or DO) in the case
of reading/learning disability.
Please call 518-474-5935 for
further information.

NEW YORK STATE LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND & VISUALLY HANDICAPPED
Cultural Education Center, Empire State Plaza
Albany NY 12230
(518) 474-5935 (800) 342-3688

STUDENT CERTIFICATION (SCHOOLS)

Student's Name: _____

School Attended: _____

Please read the following before completing the form
Contact the NYS Library for the Blind & VH School Services Librarian for additional information and assistance.

1...This certification entitles the student to receive service through the school only. The books and equipment are for use in the school and should not be taken home. If home service is requested, contact the Library for the Blind.

2...If the eligibility for this service results from a reading or learning disability, this form must be signed by Doctor of Medicine. This is to certify not only that the disability prevents the reading of standard print, but also that it is physical in origin.

3...The books and equipment should be available only to those students who have been certified with the Library as eligible to participate in this program. Unauthorized use is illegal and school personnel should ensure proper equipment use.

4...Unless the school is already registered with the Library, this certification form must be accompanied by an institutional application for the school to register.

5...The equipment is for use with recorded books borrowed from this Library; taped books from other sources (such as Recording for the Blind) must not be used to the exclusion of our books, otherwise the equipment must be returned. Our books may be ordered from the catalogs we send.

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE CERTIFYING AUTHORITY

I certify that the above-named student is currently enrolled in the school named and is unable to read standard printed material for the reason(s) indicated below:

___ Blindness ___ Visual Handicap ___ Physical Handicap

___ Reading Disability from organic dysfunction (M.D. must sign)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Title or Occupation: _____

Address: _____

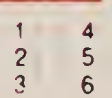
Telephone: _____

Braille Alphabet and Numerals

a b c d e f g h i j k l m

n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Capital Sign Number Sign Period Comma

The six dots of braille cell are arranged and numbered: 

The capital sign, dot 6,
placed before a letter makes a capital letter.

The number sign, dots 3, 4, 5, 6,
placed before a character, makes a number:
a preceded by the number sign is 1, b is 2, etc.

National Library Service
for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
Library of Congress
Washington, D.C. 20542

NYS LIBRARY F/T BLIND
& VISUALLY HANDICAPPED
CULTURAL EDUCATION CENTER
EMPIRE STATE PLAZA
ALBANY NY 12230
TOLL FREE 1-800-342-3688



**Application for Free Library Service
Individuals**

*National Library Service
for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped*

The Library of Congress

Washington D.C. 20542
Telephone 202-287-5100

Return To:
NYS LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND & VISUALLY HANDICAPPED
Cultural Education Center
Albany, New York 12230
(518) 474-5935
or
1-800-342-3688

Notice: Records relating to recipients of Library of Congress reading material are confidential except for those portions defined by local law as public information. To find out the extent to which the information provided on this application form may be released to other individuals, institutions, or agencies, consult the agency to which you are submitting this application. If you do not know that address, send the completed application to the Library of Congress. It will be forwarded to the appropriate agency.

Please Print or Type

Name (Last) (First) (Initial)

Street Address

City County State ZIP

Telephone () Date of Birth Sex

☐ By law, preference in lending of books and equipment is given to veterans. Please check here if you have been honorably discharged from the armed forces of the United States.

Indicate the primary disability preventing you from reading standard printed material. See definitions under eligibility criteria on page 4. Check only one box.

In addition to any of the conditions at left, do you also have a hearing impairment? If yes, indicate the degree of hearing loss.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Blindness | ☐ Moderate. Some difficulty hearing and understanding speech. |
| ☐ Visual handicap | |
| ☐ Physical handicap | |
| ☐ Reading disability | ☐ Profound. Cannot hear or understand speech. |
| ☐ Deaf and blind | |

Books and Equipment

You may borrow any of the following items. Check those you wish to receive:

- ☐ **Talking books on discs and a talking-book phonograph.**
Plays 8 rpm, 16 rpm, and 33 rpm discs.
- ☐ **Talking books on cassettes and a cassette player.**
Plays 1-7/8 ips, 15/16 ips, 2-track and 4-track cassettes.
- ☐ **Braille books.**

Magazines.

- ☐ Braille
- ☐ Flexible disc

Music materials.

- ☐ Music scores in braille
- ☐ Music scores in large print
- ☐ Instructional recordings on cassette
- ☐ Instructional recordings on disc
- ☐ Music magazines in braille
- ☐ Music magazines in recorded form

(Note: Recorded music for listening is not available through this program.)

- ☐ **Special cassette player (C-80).**
Plays tapes at faster or slower speeds, but maintains normal voice pitch.

For talking-book phonograph only.

- ☐ Plastic tone arm clip. Assists in placing tone arm on record. Helpful to readers with limited use of their hands.

For talking-book phonograph or cassette player.

- ☐ **Headphones.**
For private listening. May also assist readers with impaired hearing.

- ☐ **Amplifier.**
Special booster for use with headphones by hearing impaired persons. Must not be used by persons with normal hearing. If you request an amplifier, a special certification form will be sent to you. This form must be signed by a physician or licensed audiologist.

- ☐ **Pillowphone.**
Solely for readers confined to bed.

For cassette player only.

- ☐ **Extension lever.**
Assists readers with limited use of their hands in operating controls.

Return of equipment

Playback equipment and special attachments are supplied to eligible persons on extended loan. If this equipment is not being used in conjunction

with recorded reading material provided by the Library of Congress and its cooperating libraries, it must be returned to the issuing agency.

Reading Preferences

- ☐ Send only the specific titles I will request. Do not select books for me.
If you wish to have books selected for you, the library needs information about your reading interests. Please check the types of books or subjects you prefer, or write your reading interests in the space provided.
- ☐ I wish to have books selected for me in the categories checked below:

☐ Adventure stories
☐ Animals
☐ Bestsellers
☐ Bible & religion
 Denomination _____
☐ Biographies
☐ Classic novels
☐ Cooking &
 homemaking
☐ Detective & mystery
 stories
☐ Drama

☐ Family stories
☐ Fine arts
☐ Gothic novels
☐ Health
☐ Historical fiction
☐ History—U.S.
☐ History—World
☐ Humor
☐ About music
☐ Occult & supernatural
☐ Philosophy &
 psychology

☐ Poetry
☐ Politics & government
☐ Romance
☐ Science & nature
☐ Science fiction
☐ Sea stories
☐ Short stories
☐ Sports
☐ Spy stories
☐ Travel
☐ War stories
☐ Western stories
- My other reading interests are _____

- ☐ I do not wish to receive books that contain

☐ strong language
☐ violence
☐ explicit descriptions of sex
- ☐ Check this box if you read English only.
 or
☐ List the languages in which you are fluent, beginning with your native language.

To Be Completed by Certifying Authority
(Refer to Section B on the back of this form for a definition of certifying authority)

I certify that the applicant named has requested library service and is unable to read or use standard printed

material for the reason indicated on page one of this form. (Please print or type.)

Name

Date

Title and Occupation

Street Address

Telephone ()

City

State

ZIP

Signature

Eligibility of Blind and Other Physically Handicapped Persons for Loan of Library Materials

- A. The following persons are eligible for loan service:
1. Blind persons whose visual acuity, as determined by competent authority, is 20/200 or less in the better eye with correcting lenses, or whose widest diameter of visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees.
 2. Other physically handicapped persons as follows:
 - (a) Persons whose visual disability, with correction and regardless of optical measurement, is certified by competent authority as preventing the reading of standard printed material.
 - (b) Persons certified by competent authority as unable to read or unable to use standard printed material as a result of physical limitations.
 - (c) Persons certified by competent authority as having a reading disability resulting from organic dysfunction and of sufficient severity to prevent their reading printed material in a normal manner.
- B. In cases of blindness, visual disability, or physical limitations, "competent authority" is defined to include doctors of medicine; doctors of osteopathy; ophthalmologists; optometrists; registered nurses; therapists; professional staff of hospitals, institutions, and public or welfare agencies (e.g., social workers, case workers, counselors, rehabilitation teachers, and superintendents). In the absence of any of these, certification may be made by professional librarians or by any person whose competence under specific circumstances is acceptable to the Library of Congress.
- C. In the case of reading disability from organic dysfunction, competent authority is defined as doctors of medicine and doctors of osteopathy who may consult with colleagues in associated disciplines.
- D. Qualified readers must be residents of the United States, including the several states, territories, insular possessions, and the District of Columbia, or American citizens, domiciled abroad.

Lending of Materials and Classes of Borrowers

- A. **Veterans.** In the lending of books, recordings, reproducers, musical scores, instructional texts, and other specialized materials, preference shall be given at all times to the needs of the blind and other physically handicapped persons who have been honorably discharged from the armed forces of the United States.
- B. **Institutions.** The reading materials and sound reproducers for the use of blind and physically handicapped persons may be loaned to individuals who qualify, to institutions such as nursing homes and hospitals, and to schools for the blind or physically handicapped for the use of such persons only. The reading materials and sound reproducers may also be used in public or private schools where handicapped students are enrolled; however, the students in public or private schools must be certified as eligible on an individual basis and must be the direct and only recipients of the materials and equipment.

Braille Alphabet and Numerals

a b c d e f g h i j k l m

n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Capital Sign Number Sign Period Comma

The six dots of braille cell are arranged and numbered:

1	4
2	5
3	6

The capital sign, dot 6,
placed before a letter makes a capital letter.

The number sign, dots 3, 4, 5, 6,
placed before a character, makes a number:
a preceded by the number sign is 1, b is 2, etc.

National Library Service
for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
Library of Congress
Washington, D.C. 20542

NYS LIBRARY F/T BLIND
& VISUALLY HANDICAPPED
CULTURAL EDUCATION CENTER
EMPIRE STATE PLAZA
ALBANY, NY 12230
TOLL FREE 1-800-342-3688



SCHOOL NEWS

New York State Library for the Blind and Visually Handicapped

A NEW LOOK

School News has a new look with this issue. The Library for the Blind now has over 800 registered schools throughout New York State, and so we have gone to a new publication format.

Future issues might include photographs. Does your school have any black and white photographs of blind, visually impaired, physically handicapped, or reading disabled students in action with talking books or braille books? If you have any photograph that you would like to share with all the schools receiving this newsletter, please let us know.

Also if you have news of your school's use of LBVH materials, what works, what does not, etc. we would be happy to share your ideas with other schools through this newsletter.

YOUR SCHOOL'S NAME

While LBVH does not use numerical identification numbers for registered schools, we do have a few procedures to help us file and identify schools which receive our service.

When contacting us, whether in writing or on the telephone, it is very important that you identify yourself as the contact person for your school or BOCES and state the school's name exactly as we have it in our files. This is the only way we can promptly send your book and machine requests and also the only way we can contact you should the need arise.

As each school or BOCES program registers with the library, we send a recognition of receipt letter and include a statement as to how the school's name will appear in our files.

Please use this form of the name in all correspondence with us. A couple of brief guidelines we go by are that schools with proper names are filed under the **last name only**. BOCES are filed in a uniform fashion as BOCES-name of city in which located. And, in general, we have registered school buildings rather than school districts.

If you sometimes do not receive responses to your requests, it may be that we cannot locate you in our files. Please call or write our School Services Librarian to clear up any problems.

SPECIAL FORMAT BOOKS

We have compiled a resource directory of organizations which lend and sell children's books in special format. The directory includes sources for braille, large print and recorded editions of books for children. The list is aimed at parents but may be useful to educators as well. For a copy please contact us and request "*Book Sources for Children with Special Needs*".

SEEDLINGS

We want to remind you of a growing source for purchase of children's books in braille at reasonable prices. Seedlings' Braille Books for Children 1988 catalog includes several new and enticing titles for preschool through grade seven (approx.). These are popular book titles and some are available with inkprint text as well as braille. Contact Seedlings – Braille Books for Children, 8447 Marygrove Drive, Detroit, MI 48221.

TOLL-FREE MESSAGE RECORDING NUMBER

(800)342-3688

TOLL-FREE INFORMATION READER ADVISORY NUMBER (800)342-3111

SUMMER ACTIVITIES

Any eligible child who wishes to participate in a summer reading club should let us know. We can lend the child or his/her library books on the reading club's theme and playback equipment in time to join in the fun at the local library.

On that note we have a couple of announcements . . . We have contacted public library systems and encouraged them to make public library **summer reading programs and clubs** accessible to children who read talking and braille books.

Any library enrolling a child who needs special format reading materials may contact LBVH for a deposit collection and for quick registration and loan of equipment if necessary.

Summer camping information is also becoming available. Write to National Camps for Blind Children, Christian Record Braille Foundation, Inc., 4444 South 52nd St., Lincoln, NE 68516 (402) 488-0981.

NYSRA CONFERENCE

November 8-11, 1988, is the date of the NYSRA conference in Kiamesha Lake, NY. Patricia Brophy of the Oxford Road Elementary School, New Hartford Central School District, and Cassie Hamm, LBVH School Services Librarian, will be presenting a program on the use of talking books with learning disabled students.

We are looking for input from other resource and reading teachers around the State who are using these materials with LD students, whether in conjunction with the print books or not. We would be pleased to hear of your experiences in this field and to assist you in tailoring our service to your specific needs.

We have learned that also scheduled are two teachers from the Pleasant Avenue Elementary School in Johnstown. Paul Cuttica and Deb Seponara, will be presenting a program at NYSRA stemming from their experience this year with a new, mainstreamed blind student in their school.

ENCOURAGING ACCEPTANCE

Sesame Street Magazine has generously granted LBVH reprint permission for a two-part article "Growing with Acceptance". The articles promote understand-

ing among children with and without disabilities and offer advice to parents and teachers. Please contact us if you would like a copy of this article. Possibly teachers with a handicapped child in class would like to send a copy of the article home with each child.

REFERENCE CIRCULARS

All kinds of special resources are available from LBVH.

One series, produced by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, is called Reference Circulars. Titles of potential interest to schools include:

National Organizations Concerned with Visually and Physically Handicapped Persons

Sports, Games, and Outdoor Recreation for Handicapped Persons

Reading, Writing, and Other Communication Aids for Visually and Physically Handicapped Persons

Braille Instruction and Writing Equipment

Sources of Audiovisual Materials about Handicapping Conditions

Building a Library Collection on Blindness and Physical Handicaps: Basic Materials and Resources

Parents Guide to the Development of Preschool Handicapped Children: Resources and Services

For a copy of any of the above Reference Circulars, or a complete listing of available titles, please contact us.

As noted in earlier editions of School News, LBVH has numerous bibliographies of talking and braille books. Some that are already available include the topics of AIDS, College Admissions, U.S. Constitution, Chess, Hitler and the Third Reich, Atomic War and Atomic Power. We can do bibliographies for you on any subject needed for your students' research.

ELIGIBLE FOR TALKING BOOKS ?

Some schools are registered with LBVH but do not use our books and equipment because there are no blind or visually impaired students in the school.

Please keep in mind that talking and braille books and magazines, special playback equipment, and the full range of our services are available to schools enrolling **reading disabled and physically handicapped students** as well as those with visual impairments.

If your school has not had contact with LBVH in a long time, or if the librarian, resource teacher, or committee on special education would like to learn more about talking book service, please call or write to us.

We would like to help you use our materials so that your students can benefit.

BRAILLE / AROMA FLASH CARDS

Jerico Publications has provided LBVH with a sample supply of their unique Fifth Sense Teaching Cards.

Each 8½ x 3½ inch card depicts a capital and lower case letter of the alphabet in large, dark type, the same letter in braille, a corresponding word and finally an aroma label (scratch & sniff) with a picture of the product and very realistic scent label. (Example: M m; milk; milk label with scent; braille word milk.)

These cards can be used with visually impaired, blind, learning disabled, and sighted children alike.

They are a good way to begin discussion about how we use our various senses, how blind people read, and what braille is.

For more information write to the publisher: Jerico Publications, P.O. Box 24, Alden, NY 14004.

SCHOOL LIBRARY SYSTEMS

An informational mailing was recently sent out to the 42 School Library Systems in our service area. Included in the mailing were Reference Circulars, catalogs of our books on tape and in braille, classroom activity packs, parent's packets, school registration information and more.

We hope that the systems will publicize news of LBVH to those teachers and schools who are not already using this service or who may be registered with us but not aware of what we can provide.

Watch for news of LBVH coming from your School Library System and School Library Media Center.

LOW VISION SIMULATION KIT

A kit to simulate various types of low vision is available from: George J. Zimmerman, 4100 Copeland Drive,

Nashville, TN 37215. The kit contains several pairs of goggles with different lenses to be inserted.

These simulate vision with cataracts, retinal detachment, macular degeneration, and other causes of low vision. This kit could be used to sensitize teachers and parents working with visually impaired children. Contact Mr. Zimmerman for more information.

SPECIAL FORMAT MAGAZINES

New York Times Large Type Weekly, Consumer Reports, Science Digest, Ranger Rick's Nature Magazine, Jack and Jill, Seventeen, QST, Poetry, National Geographic, and many more magazines are available on disc to registered schools and students.

There are additional titles available from other magazine producers. Subscriptions are free for those titles which are offered through our program.

For those magazines from other producers there is sometimes a fee.

Please request *Magazines in Special Media*, a catalog of special format magazines, if you want to learn more about magazines available through this library.

LEARNING PILLOWS

We have just learned of a very special format "book" for the younger blind and visually impaired child.

Learning Pillows are sensory toys with a story and corresponding tactile activities. Stories are short but include prereading, prebraille, large print, and low vision skills practice. Eight different pillows are available at this time and the prices range from \$8.50-\$25.00.

For information please contact: Jane K. Kronheim, P.O. Box 631, New Town Branch, Boston, MA 02258.

In providing information to readers of *School News*, LBVH does not endorse any product or service referred to in this newsletter.

TO CONTACT US . . .

Please call or write to let us know how we can better serve your school and students.

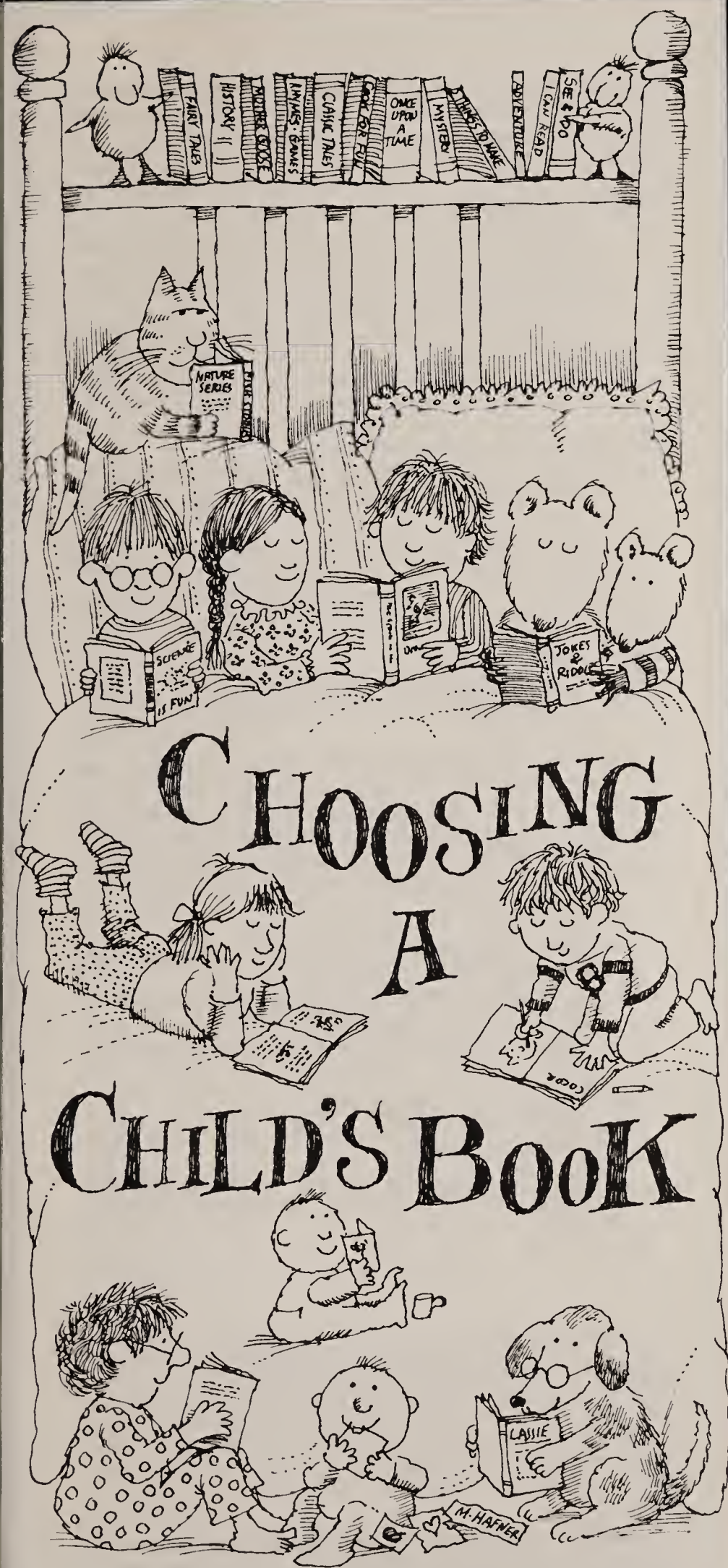
Whether you need books in braille or on tape, referrals to textbook sources, State agency information, reference assistance for your student's research projects, display materials, classroom activity packages, cassette or disc players for student use . . . we look forward to hearing from you.

Write to **Cassie B. Hamm, School Services Librarian, New York State Library for the Blind and Visually Handicapped, Cultural Education Center / Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY 12230, (518) 474-5935, (800) 342-3688.**

New York State Library for the
Blind and Visually Handicapped
Albany, New York 12230



NON-PROFIT ORG.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
Albany, N.Y.
Permit No. 293



CHOOSING A CHILD'S BOOK

A child's book is something special—uniquely rewarding and pleasurable. It is never too soon to introduce children to books. Here are some basic points about specific age groups to keep in mind when making your selections:

Babies and Toddlers

- * They are attracted by brightly colored pictures of simple objects.
- * They are listeners, if a book with simple text and good rhythm is selected for them.
- * They are visually and mentally stimulated by wordless books that encourage them to create their own stories.
- * They are delighted with board books or cloth books (which have the virtue of being practically indestructible).

Nursery School and Kindergarten

- * Mother Goose, nursery stories, and other books depicting familiar objects and experiences are enjoyable to this age child.
- * These children like listening to slightly more complex texts with good rhythm and effective word repetition.
- * They are also co-ordinated enough to have constructive fun with pop-up and other toy-like books.

Early School Years (ages 5-8)

- * There are children who begin to read as early as nursery school and others who may not be reading until the first grade or later.
- * For reading to the latter type of child, select picture books with strong story lines and character development.
- * For the child who is reading independently, choose a book with a straightforward story employing words that will be familiar from everyday use. (Many publishers produce books termed "easy readers"; independent readers like them a lot.)
- * Third graders can usually handle stories of some complexity: the vocabulary should be relatively familiar while including some challenging words.
- * A lot of informational books have been published for the early grades; these books encourage children to read about topics that interest them and to satisfy their curiosity about countless subjects.

Older Children (ages 9-12 and older)

- * Consider *who* the child is—his or her personality traits and personal preferences.
- * Make your selection with the child in mind; choose an informational book or a novel in an area of specific interest.



Publishers often indicate in a book or on its jacket the age-level or grade-level for which they think that book is most suitable. For your child, don't hesitate to choose a book that may be suggested for someone older. If a book is beyond a child's reading ability, it can be read to him or her now, and independently, later. A beautiful, well-illustrated picture book with an interesting story offers the child an esthetic experience to enjoy over and over again.

Some children's books have become classics. Many have great appeal and should be a part of everyone's reading experience. However, there are children who find a contemporary book to be

far more pleasing than a classic. Think of the child's reading enjoyment and select books that will appeal to *that* child.

Young people love paperbacks. Thousands of children's books—picture books, novels and informational books for the middle age and older reader, both reprints of hardcover books and original titles—are available in paperback editions for reasonable prices.

Be discriminating and look for quality. A fine book is not necessarily the most lavish or most expensive book on the shelf. It is a book that is written and designed well. There is a difference between garish pictures and simple, bold illustrations. Take a few minutes to *look* at the books. A book is an unlimited investment in the human mind and spirit. Certainly, its selection deserves thoughtful attention.

Some Children's Book Selection Resources

Now you have a general idea of how to select a child's book. There are a variety of helpful resources—people, books and periodicals—that can be of more concrete help to you.

Don't hesitate to seek advice from experts in the children's literature field. They are people who are practically at your doorstep. Visit your local bookstore; children's booksellers can be exceedingly helpful. They observe young customers regularly and learn to know their reading tastes. They will share their observations with you to help you make appropriate selections. Your local children's librarian is also able to provide personal counsel to you and share bibliographies of children's books, professional magazines and reviews.

Some specific sources of information about children, reading and books are:

Babies Need Books by Dorothy Butler (New York, 1980, Atheneum, 178 pp.) A thorough, sensitive guide for parents that explores both early childhood (infants through six year-olds only) and introducing books to this age group. Brief booklists appear at the end of each chapter.

Children's Book Council—CBC—(67 Irving Pl., New York, NY 10003) A publishers' association encouraging the reading and enjoyment of children's books. Official sponsor of National Children's Book Week. Prepares a variety of colorful materials to encourage reading year-round. Administers annual selective bibliographies of science books (available for 2 oz. first class postage), social studies books (available for 3 oz. first class postage), and a listing of "Children's Choices" (available for a 2 oz. stamped, self-addressed 6½ x 9 envelope from IRA, 800 Barksdale Rd., PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714). CBC Materials Brochure (available in June and January for a stamped, self-addressed #10 envelope, 1 oz. first class postage) includes illustrations and descriptions of materials produced by CBC. Newsletter, *CBC Features*, is issued at irregular intervals.

Choosing Books for Children: A Commonsense Guide by Betsy Hearne (New York, 1981, Delacorte, 160 pp.; Dell paperback, 176 pp.) A relaxed, entertaining, and extremely helpful guide for adults, especially parents, who wish to know the what, when and how of sharing books with children. Covers book selection for the pre-schooler to the young adult. Brief booklists appear at the end of each chapter.

For Reading Out Loud!: A Guide to Sharing Books with Children by Margaret Mary Kimmel & Elizabeth Segel, foreword by Betsy Byars (New York, 1983, Delacorte, 230 pp.; Dell paperback, 240 pp.) Focuses on children in elementary and middle

school and stresses the importance of the written word read aloud in both intimate and group settings. Includes strategies for creating appropriate environments and developing read-aloud techniques. 140 books are recommended, annotated, and cross-listed by subject, length, type and geographic locale.

The Horn Book Magazine (31 St. James Ave., Boston, MA 02116) Reviews books for children and young adults. Includes informative and critical articles. Published six times a year. "Fanfare", a short listing of the previous year's books considered most outstanding by the magazine's reviewers, is published annually in a late spring issue. *Why Children's Books?* is a newsletter for parents published four times a year.

How to Choose Good Books for Kids by Kate McMullan (Reading, MA, 1984, Addison-Wesley, 80 pp.) Provides criteria that help parents select titles for children. Each of the four chapters spans three years of a child's development from infancy through age 11, and includes annotated listings of individual titles and series. A clear and accessible guide.

International Reading Association (800 Barksdale Rd., Newark, DE 19714) Eight small, accessible publications directed to parents are available. Single copy free for a stamped (1 oz., first class postage) #10 self-addressed envelope. *Eating Well Can Help Your Child Learn Better*, *You Can Help Your Child in Reading by Using the Newspaper*, *Studying: A Key to Success . . . Ways Parents Can Help*, *You Can Use Television to Stimulate Your Child's Reading Habits*, *Your Home is Your Child's First School*, *You Can Encourage Your Child to Read*, *Good Books Make Reading Fun for Your Child*, *Summer Reading is Important*. Requests for four or more titles should be accompanied by 2 oz. first class postage.

The Kobrin Letter (732 N. Greer Rd., Palo Alto, CA 94303) A handsome review letter "concerning children's books about real people, places and things," informational titles for young readers of all ages. Published eight times a year.

Parents' Choice (Parents' Choice Foundation, Box 185, Waban, MA 02168) A review of all children's media—books, toys, television, movies, records, home video and computer software. Each issue also contains lively, informative articles on children and media. Appears quarterly in tabloid format.

A Parent's Guide to Children's Reading by Nancy Larrick (New York, 1982, 5th edition, Bantam paperback, 281 pp.; Philadelphia, Westminster, 284 pp.) Straightforward suggestions about introducing books to children from infancy onward. Emphasizes the importance of reading in children's lives. Annotated list of "Books They Like" occupies almost one-fourth of the book.

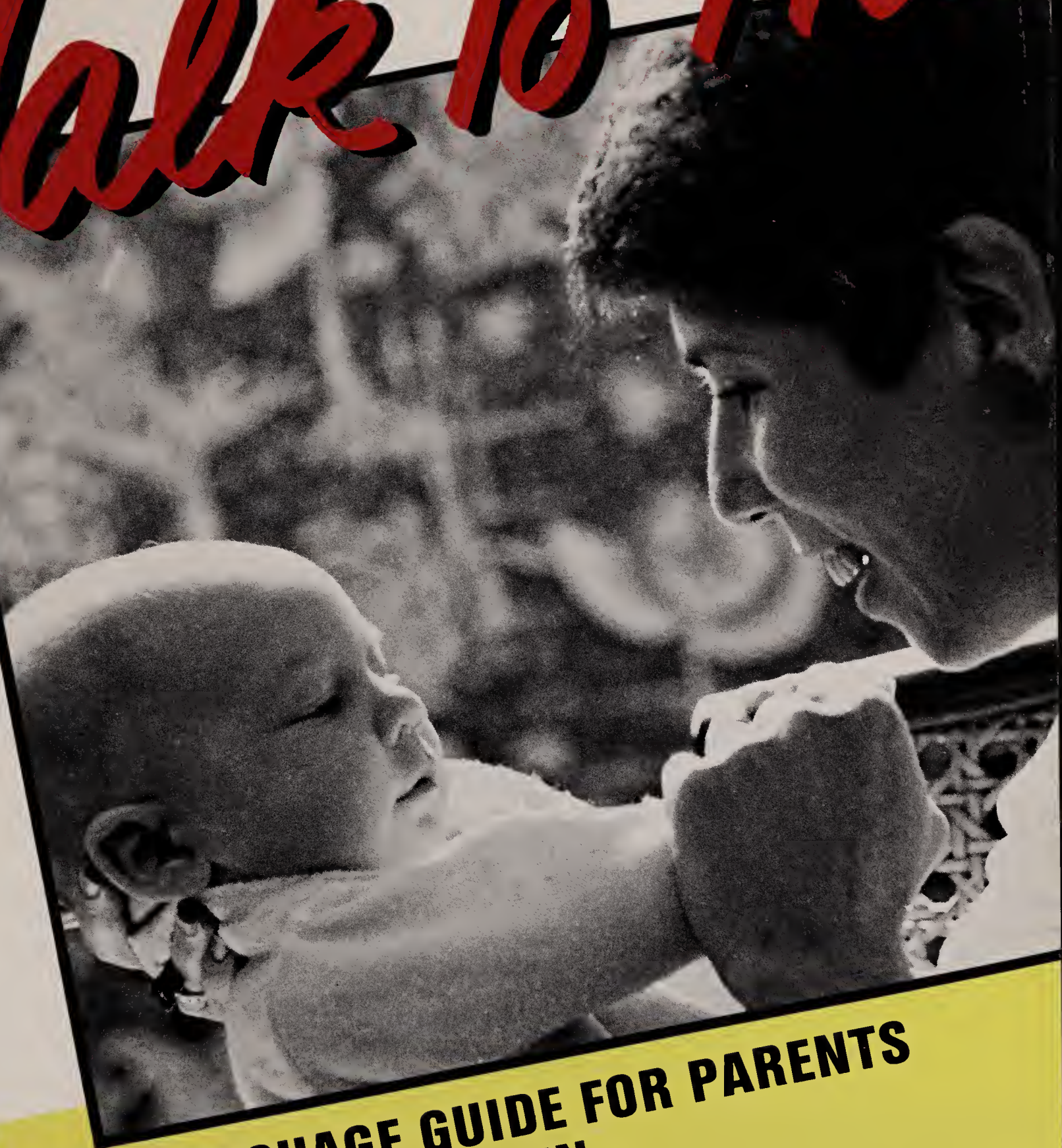
The Read-Aloud Handbook by Jim Trelease (New York, 1985, revised edition, Penguin paperback) An aid to parents for encouraging children to read. Discusses read-aloud criteria, techniques, do's and don'ts; for toddlers through junior high school age children. Half of the book is annotated listings of wordless books, picture books, short novels, novels, poetry, and anthologies.

Unless otherwise noted, there is a charge for the materials mentioned. Information is available directly from each source. Books mentioned can be purchased from your local bookseller or directly from their publishers.

Cover illustration by Marilyn Hafner



Talk To Me



**A LANGUAGE GUIDE FOR PARENTS
OF BLIND CHILDREN**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The ideas expressed in this pamphlet are the result of a cooperative effort, and there are many people we wish to thank.

We are most grateful to the families who participate in the program at the Blind Childrens Center. They have shared their discoveries with us and have helped us to formulate new questions and new ideas. We want to thank the children most of all. They have been our teachers.

Our thanks to Dr. Toni Marcy for all of her suggestions, and to Dr. Elaine S. Andersen, Doug Moore, Mary Hall and Dori Hayashi for their comments.

Our deepest appreciation goes to the Margaret Bundy Scott Trust. The concern and support of everyone involved with the Trust made the reproduction of this booklet possible.

The Blind Childrens Center offers a program of diversified services which meets the special needs of blind and partially sighted children (aged birth through seven years), their parents and siblings. Services include: Infant Stimulation Program; Mom & Me Group; Toddler Program; Therapeutic Preschool Program; Residential Program; Psychiatric Counseling; Multi-Handicapped Program; Educational Correspondence Program; Internship Opportunities.

The Blind Childrens Center is a non-profit organization available to visually handicapped children regardless of race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex or religion. Founded in 1938, the Blind Childrens Center is a project of the Southern California Delta Gamma Alumnae.



FORWARD

As the parent of a blind child, you may wonder how you and your child can find ways of understanding each other. This will be of special importance during your child's first year before he can talk. You may wonder how you will know when your child is listening if he doesn't look at you. Will your child know he's being listened to even though he can't see you are looking at him? What should you talk about when you don't know what's on your child's mind? How will you help him understand the world when he can't see what you are talking about?

At times you may feel you have more questions about your child than answers - - but remember that a blind child has the same basic needs as any other child. The two of you will need to find creative ways to meet these needs. Your child, just as any other, needs someone who is willing to share and respond to his interests. He needs someone who believes in his ability to develop into a competent and creative individual. Your child is like other children, but he does have special needs because of his visual impairment. Please remember that blind children develop differently from sighted children. In this booklet, we hope to provide you with different ways of making your interactions with your child both satisfying and fun.



Linda Kekelis, M.A.

*Research Associate
University of Southern California
University of California, Berkeley*



Nancy Chernus - Mansfield, M.A.

*Executive Director
Blind Childrens Center
Los Angeles, California*

Baby Talk

We've all used "baby talk" at one time or another with a young child. It is the special way we talk to children - - using simple, short, and correct sentences, raising the pitch of our voice, exaggerating our tone. We don't consciously think about making these changes in our speech when talking to children, and yet we do. This baby talk, though it may seem simple, helps children learn to talk.

Although young infants can't answer, we still talk at great lengths to them. We find that children do respond to our baby talk, and that even before they have words, young children "speak" back to us. How is this possible? With a glance children greet us and tell us they are ready to interact; then by looking at a favorite toy or nearby event they "suggest" what to talk about. They tell us what they want by pointing or reaching for objects and tell us what they don't want by pushing things away. And while we are talking to them, children display their interest, displeasure, and understanding through their facial expressions. It sounds so simple. But what if the child is blind?



LOOK AND LISTEN

A blind child enjoys relationships just as much as any child, but may have different ways of displaying his interest. Keep this in mind and spend time observing him. Watch him when someone new enters the room or begins talking; when the sound of a favorite toy starts or stops. What does he do? Some children stop what they're doing and become very attentive when they hear something of interest. With practice, you will discover how your child expresses his interests. By talking about the things concerning him, you will show that you care, and, more importantly, that *he* has some control over what happens in his life (in this case, over what is talked about).

Young children begin to "talk" long before they know their first words. However, they need us to creatively interpret their "speech". One sighted child we know communicated successfully with grunts. His eye gaze and gestures, along with the events around him, helped his mother understand what he was trying to say.

You'll also learn how to understand your child - - it's a matter of paying careful attention to him and to what is happening.

Infants sometimes talk to us by imitating sounds they hear, such as laughs and coughs, and it is important to acknowledge these early attempts on their part. This will provide them with a reason for learning to talk.

Children can also communicate without using words at all! One young visually impaired girl we know told her mother what routine she wanted to play (she and her mother knew many) by moving her hand on her mother's in a way which identified the routine she had in mind.



“mommy” means many things.

Even after children begin learning words they continue to have more to say than they have words to express. For example, they may use “mommy” to greet you, to request you to get an out-of-reach toy, or to make clear who they want to be with. Expanding their messages seems to help children learn, so if your child says “milk” in a requesting tone of voice, you might respond with: “Here’s the milk you asked for. It’s cold, isn’t it? Or if he says “doggie” while holding the family’s pet, you could answer with: “Yes, that’s our doggie. Is he licking your nose again? I bet the doggie feels soft after his bath. Oh, he likes it when you pet him.”

Each of these remarks tells your child that you are paying attention to what he had said and done. They also add to his understanding of

the world - - in this case that dogs like to lick people, feel soft after baths, and are affectionate.

Responding in this manner to blind children doesn’t always come easily. We sometimes underestimate what they are trying to say. We often think children can only name objects or request services. For instance, if a blind child says “apple” while holding an apple, we typically say, “Yes, that’s an apple.” And when there is no apple at hand, we ask, “Do you want me to get you an apple?” There is nothing wrong with these responses if they are not the only ones offered. Unfortunately, for some blind children, these are the only responses they receive and they miss opportunities to talk about a variety of interesting topics. Imagine how frustrating it would be if every time you talked to people they answered with, “Yes, that’s an X.” Or, “Do you want X?”, instead of with a response such as:

“You said ‘apple’. I wonder if you were thinking about the apples we had yesterday at grandma’s. She peels and slices the apples and puts cinnamon on them too.”

Be creative when you talk to your child. For instance, if your child says, “swing” while you’re pushing him on a swing, you might respond with:

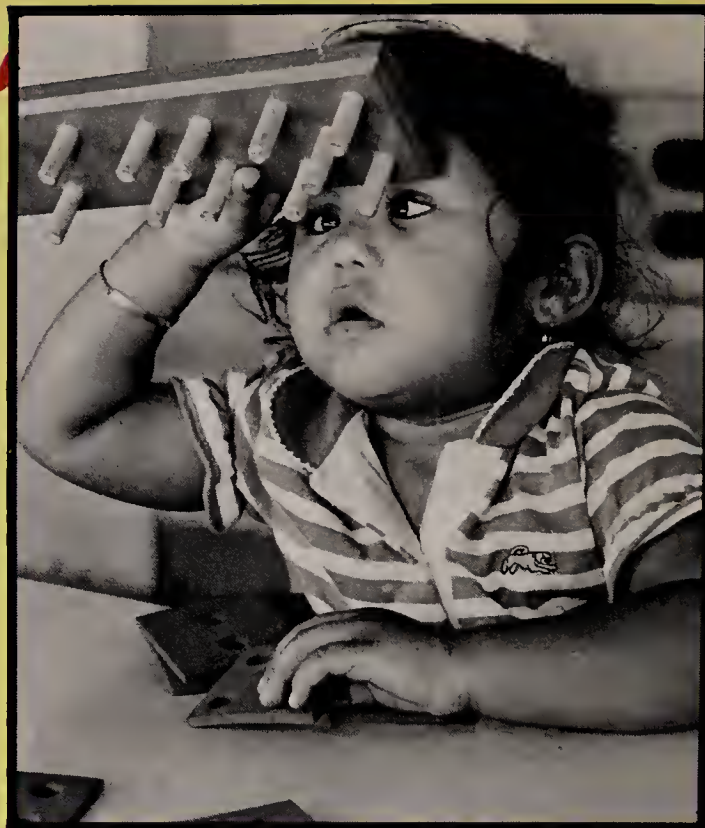
“I’m pushing you so high! You look like you’re having fun on the swing. Can you feel the wind while you swing?”



TUNE IN!

Your blind child does have special needs. But he can learn through his other senses. You must provide him with opportunities to make his own discoveries. What you can do is offer a stimulating environment with a variety of appealing toys and household items within easy reach, along with the freedom to play with them as *he* wants. Your child learns while playing in *his* own chosen fashion. However, he needs your help to fill in the gaps in his understanding. While he is playing with an object spend time watching him. You'll allow him to make his own discoveries and you'll make some yourself. One afternoon we observed a mother who instinctively chose to watch her son explore a toy record player first before teaching him how to play a record on it. From watching him, she learned which parts of the record player he explored, which parts were missed.

Just as you learn about your child by sitting back and watching him, your child also learns by "observing". Because he learns by listening to the conversations of others and the sounds in his environment, it's important that he be allowed to listen to the meaningful input around him. Include him in the family's time together. Mealtime is a good time to talk about things that interest every family member. Be sure to include your blind child in the discussion.



Also keep in mind that your child needs some *quiet* time in order to pick out and identify sounds in his environment and begin to make sense of them. For example, by discovering the different sounds of people's footsteps, he learns to anticipate which family member is coming to him; by associating the honk of a school bus with his brother's departure, he begins to organize the events in his life.

If a blind child is kept in a room where the television or radio is constantly playing, it may be more difficult for him to tune in to meaningful household sounds. Rather than providing additional stimulation for a blind child, the constant "noise" of a television or radio may cause him to ignore all sorts of sounds. Instead, he may imitate phrases from commercials, which is of limited value.



SOMETIMES...

There will be times when you won't know how to respond to your child because you can't understand what he's telling you. Sometimes, asking him to repeat himself or clarify his message will work. But when this fails, at least acknowledge him. You might say that you know he's trying to tell you something and you'd like to understand. It is especially important that you acknowledge him when you know he's upset but aren't certain why. The following kind of response would let him know you care: "You're sounding mighty upset. I'm sorry that you're not feeling well this morning. Let's find a way of making you feel better."



TALK, TALK, TALK

You don't have to wait for a special time and place to describe the world to your child. Make everyday routines into learning experiences - include him in your cooking and cleaning chores. As you talk about what you're doing, allow your child to touch, smell, taste, and listen to what is around him. Take something as everyday as a breakfast of scrambled eggs. How is your child going to know that the food served him in a bowl is the same egg bought in a carton at the supermarket? Does he know that the egg was kept in the refrigerator; that it came out of a hard shell and was then scrambled and heated, changing from a slimy substance into the scrambled egg before him?*

We understand that you might be uncomfortable talking so much. But we believe that with practice talking will become more natural.

*We wish to thank the staff of the Variety Club, San Francisco, as well as the families they serve, for sharing this idea and many others with us.

S H A R I N G

While you include your child in your activities, step into his world. You, along with the rest of your family, can spend time sharpening your senses. One family we know, with children who are both sighted and blind, spends evenings in their backyard taking in its sights, sounds, and smells.



Because your child can't see what produces the sounds and smells around him, he might need explanations about them.

Explanations may reduce your child's fear of loud noises or unfamiliar sensations, as was demonstrated for us by a mother we know. While she and her child were talking in their swimming pool, they heard the loud bounce of a diving board followed by a splash. The mother explained that the child's uncle had jumped into the pool, creating the splash and the waves the child felt. She explained the sounds and sensations which could have been startling for the child

who hadn't seen what had happened. She also drew the girl's interest to another person.

Keeping your child informed about what other people are doing can make it easier for him to join in a group's activities. Imagine how difficult it would be to become part of a group if you couldn't see what was happening. This can be especially challenging when your child is in an unfamiliar setting with strangers. You can help by describing the situation. For instance, when you bring your child to preschool or to the babysitter, tell him where the other children are in the room, what they are doing, and what toys and activities are available for him to play with.

"THIS LITTLE PIGGIE . . ."

You can help expand your child's interest in, and understanding of other people while you play together. As you teach him routines like "Ring-Around-the-Rosie" and "This Little Piggie", encourage him to take an active part in the games. For instance, as you play "This Little Piggie", ask him to find *your* fingers and toes.

As your child gets older there are other games that help him to play with other children and express himself actively. These games include:

- Rolling a ball back and forth between one or more persons. In this game your child will have a chance to be involved in one activity from two directions, both giving and receiving.
- Playing "dress-up". While dressing up and pretending to be other people, your

child will learn new roles and relationships.

- Playing telephone with a toy phone. It's fun to pretend!

In the beginning, your child will probably need extra help to play these games because he can't learn to imitate some things as easily as sighted children. But playing and having fun are the keys to developing many language skills.



How do you feel?

Blind children need extra help to learn about the feelings of others. From early on, a sighted child closely looks at the faces of other people and learns to "read" feelings from their frowns, smiles and other expressions. This is not the case for a blind child. So it is important that you describe your feelings with words and tone of voice so that your child can "feel" the smiles and expressions he can't see.

Equally important, help your other children learn to express their feelings in words to their blind brother or sister. Remind them that a blind child can't see the smile that accompanies the acceptance of a gift or the frown that follows losing a toy.



T OO MUCH TALK?

To help your child understand other people and objects around him, you will have to talk a lot and at times you may wonder if you're talking too much. Your child will usually let you know by ignoring you, turning away, or responding with "leave me alone". If you have provided him with too much information, don't worry because he will simply ignore what he doesn't need. If he seems to be anxious from too much talking, a little hug or some relaxed encouragement will help. Keep in mind that it is better to talk too much than too little.

Talking a lot to children comes more naturally to some adults than to others. If talking is difficult for you, try sharing activities you both enjoy. One mother and son we know liked bicycling, and she discovered that during and after their trips, they had much to talk about. They were motivated by sharing an experience that was fun. The same idea carries over into your everyday conversations. Be natural and share your thoughts of the moment. For instance, while you are cooking, you might say, "I'm making a special lunch today. After all the work we did this morning, I think we deserve it. How about a fresh fruit salad with strawberries to brighten us up?"

When tucking in your child at bedtime, remember the activities that you both enjoyed that day: "Mmm, I can smell the bread we made. It's baking in the oven. I'm glad you helped me knead the dough. Tomorrow we can have some with grandma's jam for breakfast."



Q uestions and more questions...

It's not just the quantity of information you provide that helps your child grow, but the quality of it. For most of us, however, talking imaginatively to blind children doesn't just happen. As we have mentioned, this is very hard work. We have found that language can become more meaningful by following up labels with descriptions. Point out how an object feels, what it is used for, or how it relates to some other object that your child is already familiar with. For instance, if you find your child bouncing on



the couch, you might comment in this way: “You’re jumping on the couch. It’s soft and springy. But couches aren’t for jumping on. Let’s get the trampoline and you can jump on that.”

When a little girl we know became interested in a purse we’d brought to her home, her mother named and described the purse. She pointed out how the purse smelled like leather, like a shoe. She discussed how the purse had a zipper, just like jeans.

It is also helpful to provide a description when you introduce your child to other people. You might tell your child something about what the person does or where he lives.

If you’re not providing your child with enough information about his environment, he may let you know with questions. It will take extra effort on your part to answer all of his questions, but keep in mind that much of what a sighted child learns comes by watching people and events. Your child will use questions to make sense of what is happening around him.

Some blind children never seem to run out of questions: they ask questions to draw attention to themselves; to keep in touch with others; to share what’s on their minds. They sometimes even ask questions they already know the answers to! Unfortunately, these children may turn off other people with their endless questioning. Why do some blind children seem to ask so many questions and what can you do?

First of all, spend time listening to your child and to the people he talks to. Is he able to get the attention of others when he doesn’t ask questions? Some children resort to questions because that is the only way they can get a response. If you find this is true of your child, you might look for other ways to help him attract attention. One way he can do this is by addressing his remarks directly to the person he is talking to. For example, you might suggest that he say, “Sally, talk to me.” Also, notice whether your child begins to speak in the *middle* of the conversations of others. If he does, it may be that most of his remarks are ignored but his persistent questions are answered. If this is the case, tell your child, when he is old enough to understand, that it isn’t polite to interrupt others when they’re talking. And try not to get into the habit of always answering his questions when he interrupts you.

Talk to your child *before* he asks a question. Respond to his actions and comments so that he doesn’t have to ask for your attention.

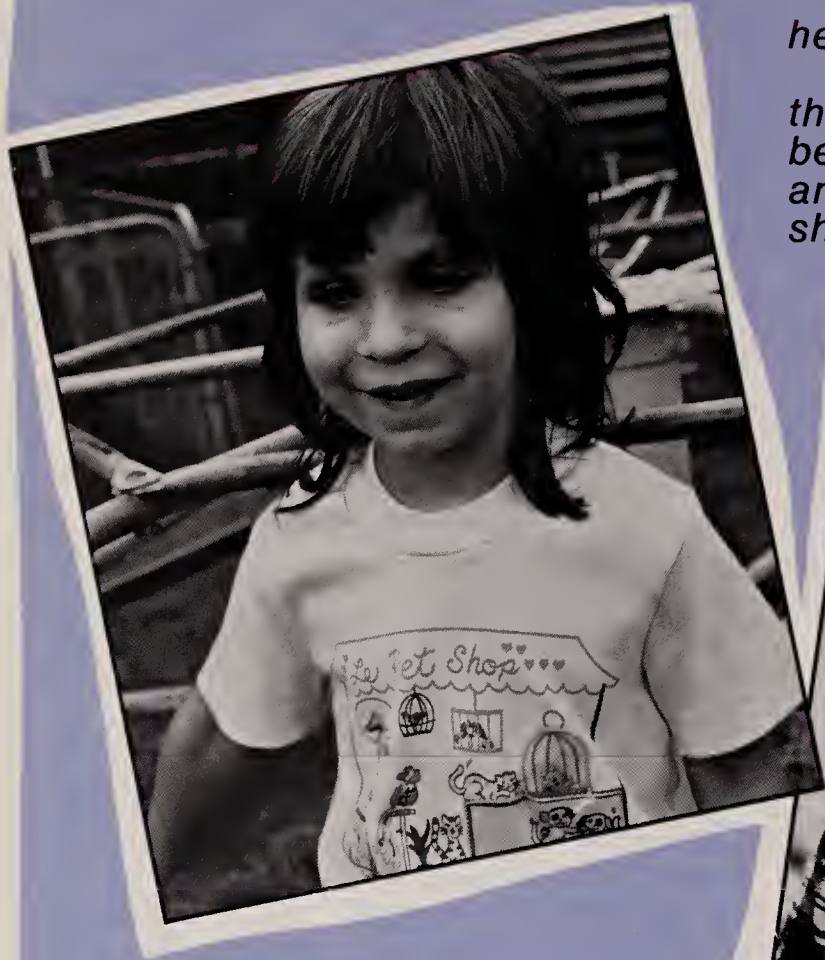
Have a look at your speech to see if you are asking your child a lot of questions. All children are asked questions. However, we have observed that some blind children are constantly being questioned. If you find you are always asking your child questions, try other ways of attracting his attention such as calling his name or making physical contact with him. Sometimes share your observations with your child in statement form.



And Finally . . .

We hope some of these ideas have been helpful.

You are the most important person in the world to your child. Trust yourself because you know your child better than anyone. Because of your special relationship, you are your child's best teacher.



DESIGN: DONNA EBLE
PHOTOGRAPHY: AFSHIN
LEONARD HORN
CAROL STEPPE
BRUCE HOLZ



BLIND CHILDREN CENTER PHONE:
(213) 664-2153



THE BLIND CHILDRENS CENTER

4120 Marathon Street P.O. Box 29159
Los Angeles, California 90029-0159

NON-PROFIT ORG.

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

Permit No. 31898

Los Angeles, CA

TALK TO ME II



Common Concerns

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

"Talk to Me: A Language Guide for Parents of Blind Children" was our first publication. It offered concrete suggestions to encourage language development. "Talk to Me II: Common Concerns" is a result of the thoughtful and enthusiastic feedback we received from many people. The comments and questions raised by parents and professionals regarding the language development of young blind children provided direction for this booklet.

We are especially grateful to the families who shared their personal experiences with us. We offer special thanks to Mr. Bob Wilson who combined his professional expertise in linguistics with his personal experiences with his young blind son. We also wish to thank Dr. Elaine S. Andersen, Dr. William C. Doust, Dr. Amanda Hall, Dr. Toni G. Marcy, Dr. Ann Peters, and Mr. Shepherd Siegel for their help.

With profound appreciation, we thank everyone involved with the Margaret Bundy Scott Trust. "Talk to Me II" is one booklet in a series made possible through this Trust. Their generosity and commitment to blind children have enabled us to make this information available throughout the world.

The Blind Childrens Center offers a program of total-family services which best meets the special needs of blind and partially sighted children (from birth through seven years of age), their parents and their brothers and sisters.

Services include: Infant Stimulation Program, Mom & Me Groups, Toddler Program, Therapeutic Preschool Program, Residential Program, Psychiatric Counseling, Multi-Handicapped Program, Educational Correspondence Program, Internship Opportunities.

In addition, the Blind Childrens Center began a Publication and Research Program in 1984. Through this program, publications will be systematically distributed to professionals and parents of visually handicapped children throughout the world. Publications will be available in English and Spanish.

The Blind Childrens Center is a non-profit organization available to visually handicapped children regardless of race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex or religion. The Blind Childrens Center is the sole philanthropic project of the Southern California Delta Gamma Alumnae.

INTRODUCTION

Language is an important means for getting acquainted and sharing experiences with any child, but for a totally blind child it is especially important. While every parent is pleased when a child says her first word, such an event takes on special significance when the child is blind.

Before sighted children begin to talk, they are able to communicate with us in a number of ways. They acknowledge our presence and express preferences with smiles. Their frowns reveal displeasure and blank stares tell us we are not understood. With just a smile or look our way, sighted children encourage us to talk to them. We talk about the people around them, describe events they are looking at, and show them how to do new tasks. Through language, we help children learn about themselves and the world.

Language is even more important for children who cannot see. Blind children use language to get to know people and the world around them. However, it may take them longer to learn their first words. With help from their families, blind children learn to talk.

Over the years, many parents have expressed three common concerns about the language of their blind children. They are:

1. REPETITIONS 2. QUESTIONS 3. PRONOUNS

These concerns occur most often for totally blind children, and this booklet will address the needs of these children in particular.

Because each child is different, it is important that families find their own ways to meet their child's needs. We cannot prescribe one set of answers, but instead describe a number of suggestions to help you find your own solutions. An idea that works with one child may fail with another. You know your child better than anyone else and can best decide how to use these suggestions. You may have already tried some of the ideas in

the following pages and found them to work well. Perhaps others will be new to you.

In this booklet, we will point out some areas of concern to watch for in your child's language development. These are not meant to alarm you, but merely to serve as guidelines regarding potential difficulties. We hope to alleviate unnecessary worry and to help you decide when professional help may be needed. We also hope that you are reassured knowing that many parents with blind children have experienced the same concerns and have asked the same questions. While there is no one "right" answer to these questions, there are a number of things you can do to help your child.

NANCY CHERNUS-MANSFIELD, M.A.

Executive Director
Blind Childrens Center
Los Angeles, California

DORI HAYASHI, M.A.

Director of Development
Blind Childrens Center
Los Angeles, California

LINDA KEKELIS, M.A.

Research Associate
University of California, Berkeley



I. THERE'S AN ECHO IN THE ROOM

"Do you want a cookie?" asks mom.
"Do you want a cookie?" repeats Brian.
"Brian, if you want a cookie, say,
'I want a cookie,'" requests mom.
"Say, I want a cookie," answers Brian.

This kind of conversation may be very familiar to you. Many parents of blind children report that their children repeat language for some time as they learn to talk.

Most children repeat some of the sounds and words they hear. By repeating the speech of others, children practice the names of people, animals, and toys that are important to them.

It isn't long before most sighted children begin to creatively use the language they once imitated. For example, a little boy we know used the word *daddy* to talk about his father, as well as his uncles and other men before discovering the real meaning of the word. Through trial and error, children learn the meanings of countless words. Between the ages of two and three years, sighted children begin to combine words in creative ways to make sentences that express their own ideas and feelings.

Children differ in the degree to which they repeat the language they hear. However, most blind children do more repeating than other children. Some professionals call this repeated speech "echolalia" or "parroting." This type of language expresses itself in different ways with different children. It can take the form of television jingles, nursery rhymes, or other people's ways of talking.

Understanding Why

There are a number of reasons why your child may repeat the language she hears.

- Your child may simply want to say, "Hi." Imitation can be a way for your child to

begin a conversation—a way of saying, "I want to talk to you."

- Repeating the language of others can also be a way for your child to keep in touch with you. While she may want to communicate, your child may not know exactly how to respond to you.
- Because she cannot see what you are talking about, your child may sometimes not understand what your words mean. She may repeat what you say but not yet be able to express her own ideas.
- A sighted child will look at an object over and over again thereby reinforcing the concept of what it is. A blind child will, in a questioning tone of voice, repeat the name of an object again and again to reinforce the concept.
- Your child may practice new and difficult sounds and experiment combining words to make sentences when she imitates you. Sighted children often do this when they are alone in their cribs. They work on sounds that are difficult to pronounce and go over events that took place during the day. In this way children integrate their experiences and master language.

What Can I Do?

As most children grow and learn about language, they repeat the speech of others less often. This is not the case for most blind children. Blind children often spend more time repeating language than using it creatively. Some blind children "get stuck"



on particular phrases or television jingles. This may happen if a child spends too much time listening to television or radio by herself. These activities may be enjoyable for a blind child and give a parent some "time-off." However, they should not take the place of "hands-on" experiences with a variety of different people and objects. Listening to a television or radio does not provide a child with the necessary opportunities to practice talking and listening to others. In addition, television and radio can block out sounds that are important in a blind child's environment. The sounds of a refrigerator door opening, tap water running, and brother and sister playing can help a blind child better understand her environment.

1. Your child's early repetitions need to be encouraged. It is important that you *acknowledge* your child's messages as well as *expand* upon them. We have found that when you imitate and expand upon your child's language, you encourage your child to continue talking. When you use your child's words to build on, it shows that you are REALLY listening and are interested in what she has to say.

"Are you ready for bed?"
daddy asks.

"Ready for bed?" Laura says.

"Yeah. It's bedtime. You've had a busy day," says daddy.

2. Try your best to *respond to the ideas and feelings* in your child's repetitions. They are the reasons she learns to talk. By paying careful attention to your child's actions and the events that take place around her, you will often discover what she is trying to say.

"Cindy, it's time to go see Dr. Jacobs," mom says.

"See Dr. Jacobs. See Dr. Jacobs," repeats Cindy.

"You sound a little frightened, Cindy. I'll be with you the whole time and you can sit on my lap," reassures mom.

3. Language shared with a blind child needs to be *reinforced with hands-on experiences*. When your child understands you, she may be less likely to mimic your speech.



"This rock feels smooth," mom says while she encourages Carol to explore the surface of a rock.

"Cold," Carol comments.

"It is smooth and cold. We brought this rock back from our camping trip," mom remembers.

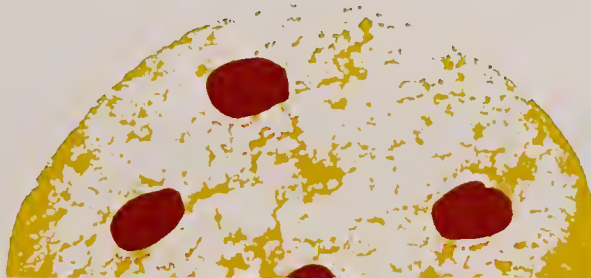
4. There are times when you *need to be honest* with your child and let her know when her language is not appropriate. As she gets older, your child may sometimes need to be reminded that *her* message rather than the speech of another person is called for.

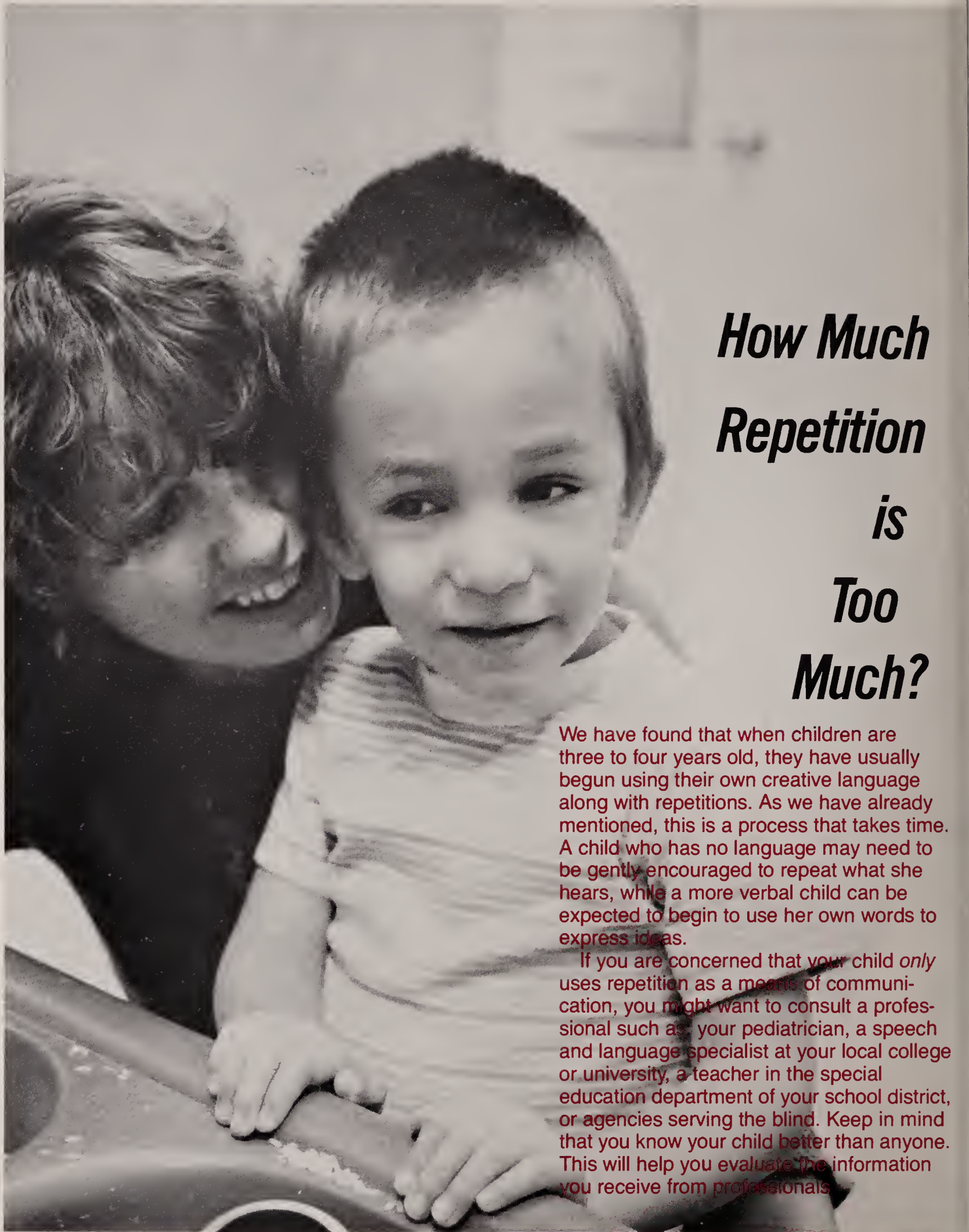
"Would you like to come shopping with me or play with daddy?" asks Grandma.

"You like to come shopping?" says Laura.

"I think you mean, 'I'd like to come shopping.' Okay, let's go to the market," says Grandma.

5. It is important to provide your child with a *variety of experiences* that enrich her understanding of the world around her. By interacting with many different people, your child will hear many ways of talking. The experiences she shares with you can be complemented by activities with brothers and sisters, children in the neighborhood, and family friends.





How Much Repetition is Too Much?

We have found that when children are three to four years old, they have usually begun using their own creative language along with repetitions. As we have already mentioned, this is a process that takes time. A child who has no language may need to be gently encouraged to repeat what she hears, while a more verbal child can be expected to begin to use her own words to express ideas.

If you are concerned that your child *only* uses repetition as a means of communication, you might want to consult a professional such as your pediatrician, a speech and language specialist at your local college or university, a teacher in the special education department of your school district, or agencies serving the blind. Keep in mind that you know your child better than anyone. This will help you evaluate the information you receive from professionals.

II. WHAT'S THAT?

"What's that noise?" asks Jimmy.
"It's the lawnmower," answers dad.
"What's that noise?" asks Jimmy.
"The gardener down the street.
He's cutting the grass," says dad.
"What's that noise?" asks Jimmy.
"What noise?" asks dad.
"That noise," replies Jimmy.

The father of this blind three-year-old complains of feeling totally drained at the end of a day. He feels as though he cannot say another word. Throughout the day, this father tries to answer his son's questions in order to explain what he cannot see.

Blind children use questions for many reasons. In this section, we will address some of these reasons. Sometimes, children ask questions in order to attract attention; sometimes, children ask questions because they do not have the language skills necessary to engage in conversation; sometimes, children ask questions because they are constantly being asked questions by adults.

Blind children have fewer ways to attract attention. Some blind children discover that questions get their parents to notice and respond to them. Oftentimes, they are not looking for answers to questions but are really saying to parents, "I'm here. Pay attention to me." You may be able to reduce your child's questions by spending more time talking to him. We don't suggest that you talk non-stop. Give your child a chance to respond. A good rule of thumb is to just talk often enough so he knows you are nearby and are available to him.

There will be times when you may find it difficult to answer your child's questions. If you try to ignore the questions, they won't go away. In fact, your child may ask even more questions. When you feel tired or frustrated, try to set up an activity that your child enjoys and can do on his own or with a brother or sister. If possible, try to arrange for someone else to take care of your child to give you some time to yourself. It is all right to tell your child how you feel when you need some quiet time alone. It is important that shared times be enjoyable for both of you.

I'm Here!

There are lots of ways for sighted children to capture our attention. They can look our way, share a smile, point to a desired toy, or tug at our clothes. Sometimes they ask questions.





Special Time Together

A mother we know used to feel guilty when she spent time doing things which took her attention away from her child. She felt she should be playing with her son all the time he was awake. This is not possible, nor is it necessary. To lessen the guilt, we have found it helps to incorporate a "special time" with your child into your daily routine. This special time (perhaps 20 minutes) can be used in any way which is enjoyable for you and your child. It can be a time to read a story, take a walk, or play a game. This is a time your child will come to look forward to. When you are feeling tired, you can say "Timmy, right now it's my time to read the newspaper. Right after lunch, we will have our special time together."

New Experiences

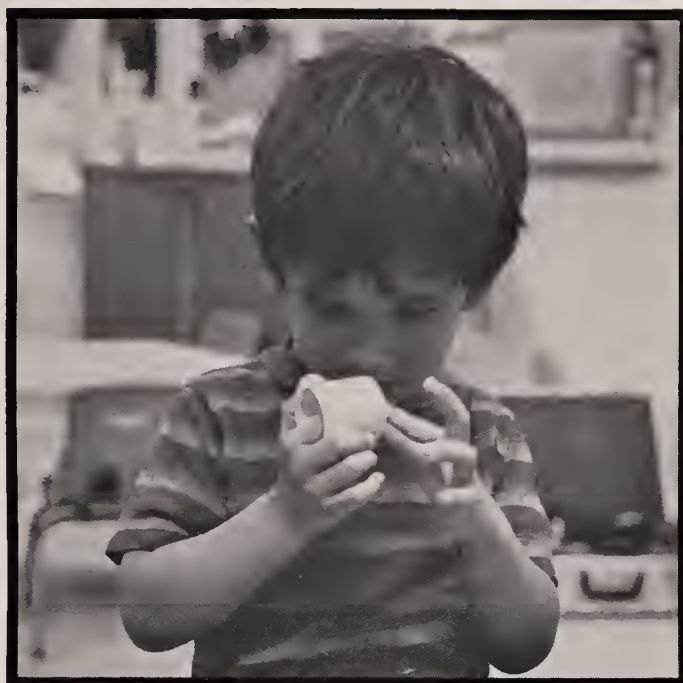


All children ask questions about things that frighten them. They may ask for an explanation of thunder during a rain storm or a dog barking next door. While we may take these noises for granted, they can be extremely frightening and confusing to young children. Events in the surroundings may be even more bewildering to a child who cannot see.

New experiences prompt many blind children to ask more questions than usual. Listen to your child next time he is in an unfamiliar place or with strangers. Does he ask a lot of questions? Does he seem to be asking for answers or for comfort from the sound of your voice? It is important to reassure your child with a gentle word or soft touch that everything is all right.

When some blind children are in noisy or busy places, they ask many questions. Their questions are a way of asking, "What's going on? What's going to happen next?" Next time you and your child are in a noisy shopping center, it may be helpful to say something like:

"Kevin, it's awfully noisy in here. We have to go to one more store so that I can buy a belt for daddy. After that, we're going to Aunt Mary's house to see her new puppy."



We have also found it helpful to *describe* new experiences before introducing them to blind children. In this way, you can answer your child's concerns before he asks you a question. For example, a new food can be described and compared with a food which your child already likes.

"For lunch today we're going to have something new. Corn dogs. They're like hot dogs. You eat them on a stick. I think you're going to like them."

It is helpful to prepare your child for visits so he knows what to expect. When you go on a visit, bring along a familiar toy or blanket that offers security to your child. Having something to hold on to may help your child feel more comfortable. Try to spend some quiet time alone with him during the visit and discuss his feelings. For example:

"Johnny, I know you are worried because you hear Chris crying. He fell down, but he'll be okay. His mommy is taking care of him."





How Many Questions Are Too Many?

It is common for all children to ask questions. In fact, most children go through a stage, sometime between two and four years, of endlessly asking questions.

Many blind children “get stuck” in this question-asking stage. However, we can’t be certain how to respond to their questions unless we have some idea of what is going on for the child in a particular situation.

What Can I Do?

Your child needs help if he asks too many questions. He may need to learn how to listen to others and how to share ideas.

1. Children’s questions often express their feelings. It is helpful to put feelings into words—both your child’s feelings and your own. You can offer a model of what to say that is appropriate to the situation. Perhaps you and your child are on the way home from a doctor’s visit and your child is asking over and over:

“Where’s my band-aid?”

“Does it hurt to get a shot?”

“Are we going home now?”

These kinds of questions might be a way of saying, “I was scared and didn’t like going to the doctor.” In response, you might say:

“Going to the doctor can be very scary and I know that shots hurt. I

don’t like getting shots either. It’s all over now. Tonight, you can tell daddy about your visit to the doctor.”

2. It is important to listen to yourself when you talk to your child. Perhaps you are asking endless questions. Without eye contact and facial expressions, it is difficult to “read” a blind child. We all get caught up in asking too many questions when we are with a blind child because we want the reassurance that our child is listening. Rather than saying,

“Jennifer, do you want alphabet soup?”

you might say,

“Jennifer, today we’re going to have alphabet soup for lunch.

I bought your favorite crackers to go with it.”

3. There will be times when you need to be direct and tell your child that he has asked enough questions. On these occasions you may need to say something like:

“Joshua, I know you want to be part of our conversation and that’s why you’re asking so many questions. But now it’s time to listen to Mark. When he’s finished, it will be your turn to talk.”

“Off-The-Wall” Questions

“Sorry I’m late but I had a flat tire this morning,” says Aunt Mary.

“Where’s Big Bird?” asks five-year-old Joey.

“Oh, have you been watching Sesame Street this morning?” replies Aunt Mary. “Anyway, as I was saying, I had a flat and didn’t have my automobile club card with me.”

“Do you like french fries?” asks Joey.

“Huh? Oh, yes. I love french fries,” answers Aunt Mary.

The kinds of questions Joey asked were “off-the-wall.” They had nothing to do with what Aunt Mary was talking about.

A seven-year-old who we know asks questions everyone he meets about their cars. Alan begins conversations with, “Hi, what kind of car do you have?” and continues to ask, “Do you have automatic windows?” and “What size engine does your car have?” Alan found a set of questions that helps him talk to people. When he is at a loss for words, Alan asks questions—always the same questions. Because of the kinds of

questions he asks, Alan does not learn very much about other people—their likes and dislikes, their feelings, and ideas are never explored. People are not able to learn much about Alan either. He does not talk about his hobbies, the tapes he likes, or his favorite subject in school.

There is a fine line between appropriate and inappropriate questions, like those asked by Joey and Alan. If you feel that something is wrong—that your child asks too many irrelevant questions—pay attention to that feeling. It may be time to consult a professional. If your child is four or five years old and is unable to participate in conversations, he may need some extra help.

It will take your child time to learn to listen and respond to others and ask fewer irrelevant questions. You will need to be patient as he learns to use questions in a meaningful way and take part in conversations.

Meaningful questions help children make discoveries about their environment. It is appropriate for children to ask questions about things they do not fully understand. By responding to these questions, parents help their children understand the events that take place around them as well as the feelings and viewpoints of others.



What Can I Do?

Children like Joey and Alan need help to learn to ask the “right” kinds of questions—questions that are related to the conversations and interests of other people. The following suggestions offer some ways to deal with a child’s irrelevant questions.

1. When your child abruptly changes the topic of conversation, you will sometimes need to redirect his interest. Consider the conversation with Joey and Aunt Mary. We would recommend giving Joey the appropriate words to respond to Aunt Mary. For example:

“Joey, Aunt Mary is talking about her flat tire. I know you want to talk to her too. You could say, ‘How did you get your tire fixed?’”

2. A child like Alan needs to learn the kinds of questions that are appropriate to ask strangers. He needs to learn to begin conversations with questions like, “Hi, how are you?” or “What are you doing today?” These kinds of questions can help a child get to know others.

3. Your child should be expected to respect the rights of others. Mealtimes provide excellent opportunities for a child to share the interests and ideas of others. It is important that families do not focus solely on the interests and needs of the handicapped child.



III. PRONOUNS

It's common for a blind child to say:

"Debbie wants to listen to music."

"She doesn't want to go to bed."

"You want a drink of water."

...when the child really means to say *I*.

Many children make mistakes using pronouns. Unlike the names of people, the meanings of pronouns depend on many different things—on who is talking, who is being talked to, and what is being talked about. While pronouns may seem complicated, most children learn how to use them correctly by their third birthday. Some blind children take longer to learn pronouns. It often takes an extra year or two for a blind child to learn how to use pronouns correctly, especially *I*, *you*, *he* and *she*.

One reason blind children may find it difficult to learn pronouns is because they cannot see what is talked about. Most children rely on what they see in order to understand what they hear. For example, when a sighted child hears her father ask, "Can *you* bring *me that*?" she sees her father first look to her and then at his running shoe lying on the floor. Even before she understands each word in her father's request, this child will probably understand the meaning of his request and will successfully carry it out.

Another reason why blind children may have difficulty learning to use pronouns correctly is because of the way in which other people talk to them. Some people talk *about* rather than *to* blind children. These children often hear:

"Would *she* like a tuna fish sandwich for lunch?"

"Can *she* do it by *herself*?"

When a child is having trouble with pronouns, some parents avoid using them altogether and instead use the child's first name. For example, some parents ask their child, "Does *Cindy* want to go outside?" Early on, it is natural for parents to sometimes talk like this to children. Parents may do this in order to avoid confusing their child. We encourage parents to follow up with the correct pronouns. For example:

"Give mommy the keys."

"Give *me* the keys."

"Good Cindy, *you* gave *me* the keys."



It is important to keep in mind that all children make mistakes as they learn to talk. They learn to use language appropriately by hearing language used correctly and learning from their mistakes.

We encourage you to use the appropriate pronouns when you talk to your child. We also encourage you to sometimes begin sentences with your child's first name so that she knows she's being spoken to. For example, rather than always saying, "Does Nancy want to go outside?" you might instead ask, "Nancy, do you want to go outside?" You can accompany this question with a gentle stroke to the cheek or a pat on her shoulder to let her know that she is being spoken to.



Blind children who often imitate other people's speech have difficulty using pronouns correctly. A child who imitates the language she hears may need to be encouraged to express her ideas and feelings in her own words. For example, perhaps Karen withdraws when another child takes away her toy. You might try to explain how she is feeling and give her the words to express those feelings.

“I see you're really angry, Karen, because Eric took your toy. You can say to Eric, 'Eric, I don't like it. I want my toy. It's mine.'”



What Can I Do?

When your child is learning to talk it is important that you respond to her ideas. *What* she is trying to say is more important than *how* she says it. If your child says, “She’s tired,” at the end of a hectic day, you can respond with:

“Yes, we did have a busy day. I’m tired too.”

Early on, it is not necessary for you to correct her speech. In fact, even if you try to teach her how to use pronouns correctly, you will not succeed. Until children are ready to learn, corrections do not work. Talk with her about the interests you share. Enjoy talking with your child.

Make It Fun

The activities suggested below may help your child to learn about pronouns.

1. TAKING TURNS...

The language that accompanies the games you and your child play may help her learn how pronouns are used.

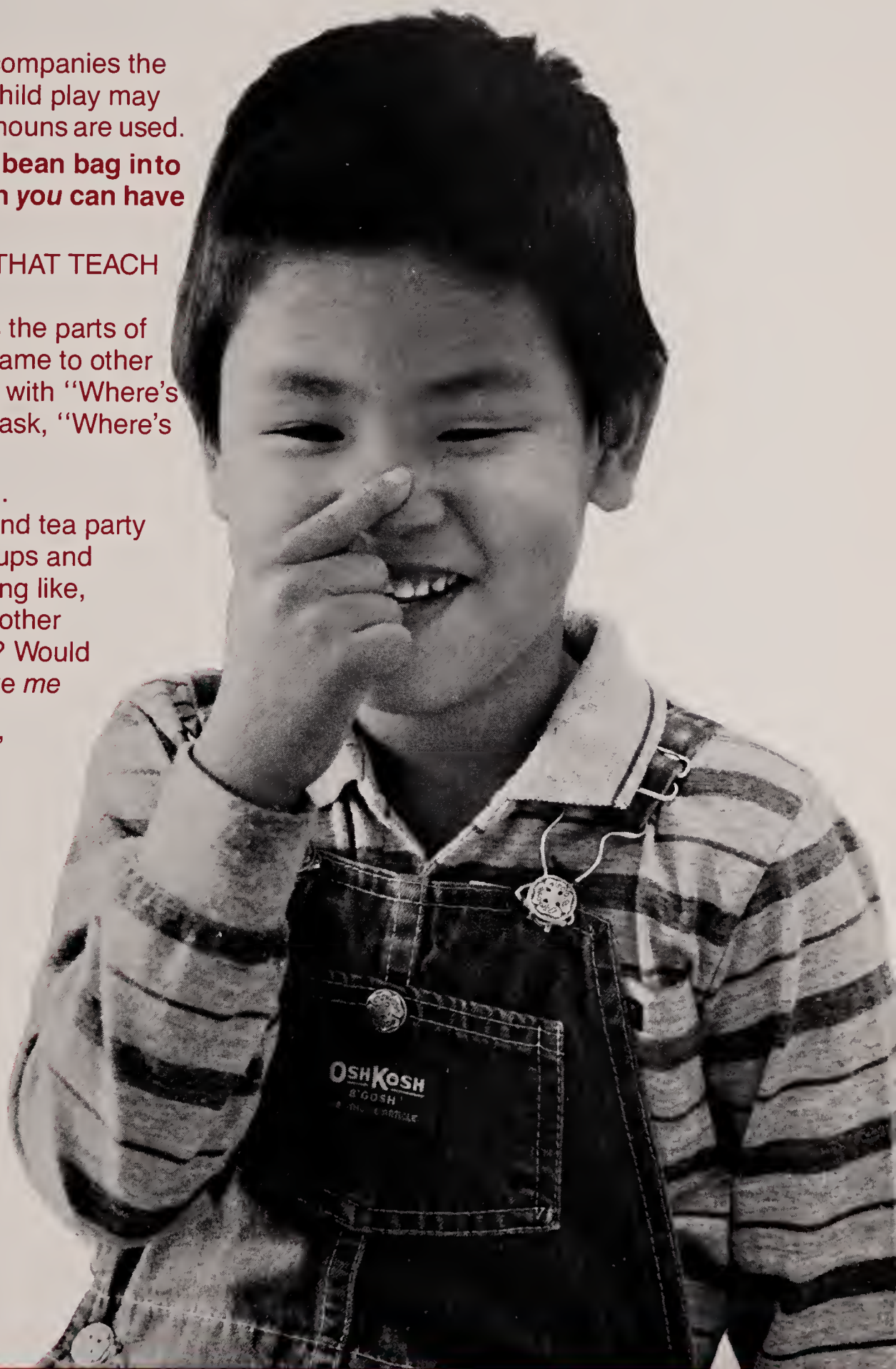
“First, I’ll drop the bean bag into the basket and then you can have your turn.”

2. PLAYING GAMES THAT TEACH BODY PARTS...

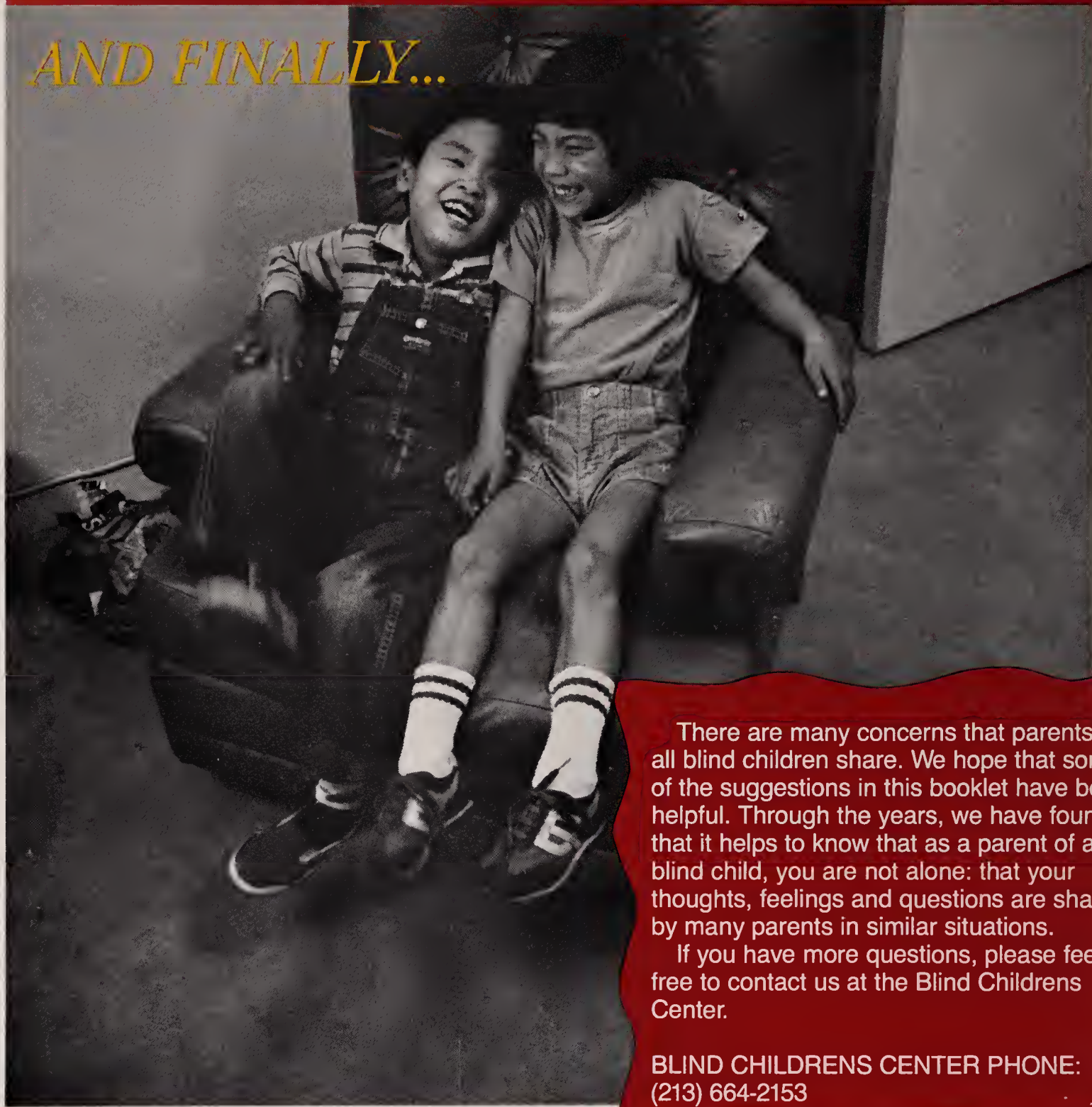
Once your child learns the parts of her body, extend the game to other people. You can begin with “Where’s *your* nose?” and later ask, “Where’s *my* hair?”

3. PLAYING HOUSE...

You can set up a pretend tea party using plastic dishes, cups and real food. Say something like, “Can I please have another piece of apple, Emma? Would *you* like some tea? Give *me* your cup and I’ll pour you some pretend tea.”



AND FINALLY...



There are many concerns that parents of all blind children share. We hope that some of the suggestions in this booklet have been helpful. Through the years, we have found that it helps to know that as a parent of a blind child, you are not alone: that your thoughts, feelings and questions are shared by many parents in similar situations.

If you have more questions, please feel free to contact us at the Blind Childrens Center.

BLIND CHILDRENS CENTER PHONE:
(213) 664-2153

Design: Donna Eble Production: Tinka Menkes Photography: Afshin

THE BLIND CHILDRENS CENTER

4120 Marathon Street P.O. Box 29159
Los Angeles, California 90029-0159

NON-PROFIT ORG.

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

Permit No. 31898

Los Angeles, CA



HEART TO HEART

Parents of Blind and Partially Sighted Children Talk About Their Feelings



Acknowledgements

This booklet is very special to all of us. We are most grateful to the families who participate in the programs at the Blind Childrens Center. They have shared their discoveries and have been our wisest teachers. Our thanks also to Dr. Toni G. Marcy and Dr. William C. Doust for their support and guidance.

Our deep appreciation goes to the Margaret Bundy Scott Trust. *Heart to Heart* is the third booklet in a series made possible through this Trust. The commitment and generosity of everyone involved with the Trust have enabled us to make this series available throughout the world.

The Blind Childrens Center offers a program of diversified services which meets the special needs of blind and partially sighted children (from birth to seven years), their parents and siblings. Services include: Infant Stimulation Program; Mom & Me Groups; Toddler Groups; Therapeutic Preschool; Residential Program; Multi-Handicapped Program; Speech and Language Program; Psychiatric Counselling Services; Parent Groups; Educational Correspondence Program/National Hotline; Internship Opportunities; Research and Publication Program.

The Blind Childrens Center is a non-profit organization available to visually handicapped children regardless of race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex, or religion. The Center receives no state or federal assistance and is funded by private donations. Founded in 1938, the Blind Childrens Center is a project of the Southern California Delta Gamma Alumnae.

Introduction

Through the years, we have been privileged to have many parents discuss with us their reactions and concerns upon learning that their babies are visually handicapped. Because of their openness, we have become aware that many feelings are commonly shared.

Parents are able to come together and meet other families at the Blind Childrens Center. This sharing process acknowledges that their feelings are a normal reaction to a diagnosis of visual impairment and reassures parents that they are not alone.

The impact of blindness upon a family is tremendous and places great demands on parents' time, energies, and emotional resources. Feelings arise which are not always understood or easy to talk about. As our parents have taught us, it sometimes takes years to gain perspective about the feelings we will be discussing in this booklet. The parents who have contributed to *Heart to Heart* have had the benefit of time and support to help them understand their feelings.

We hope that you will be able to draw comfort and reassurance from this booklet. *Heart to Heart* is meant to be a description, not a prescription, of many feelings which parents have experienced. Our families hope that their candid thoughts will help other parents who are just beginning to confront the challenges of raising a visually impaired child.

Nancy Chernus-Mansfield, M.A.
Executive Director
Blind Childrens Center
Los Angeles, California

Dori Hayashi, M.A.
Director of Development
Blind Childrens Center
Los Angeles, California

Marilyn Horn, M.S.W.
Licensed Clinical Social Worker
Blind Childrens Center
Los Angeles, California

Linda Kekelis, M.A.
Research Assistant
University of California
Berkeley, California

Before the birth of any baby, we all have dreams and expectations about what the future holds. Most parents anticipate the birth of their child with joy and excitement. During this time, parents imagine what their child will look like and plan for the future. In many cases, parents' hopes are fulfilled with the birth of a healthy child.

But what happens when a diagnosis of visual impairment is made? There is no typical parental reaction, for each person deals with feelings in a personal way. But the impact of blindness upon all family members is tremendous due to demands made in terms of time, energy, and feelings which are puzzling and difficult to talk about.

Parents learn that their child is visually handicapped at different times and in different ways. Some parents learn of the impairment soon after their child is born.

When a child is born prematurely, there can be months of agony waiting to learn if the baby will live or die. When the baby's survival is assured, then parents, whose emotional resources are already depleted, may be faced with a diagnosis of visual loss.

In other cases, parents take their baby home from the hospital thinking that everything is fine. During the weeks and months that follow, they begin to suspect that "something" is wrong. Perhaps their baby doesn't look or smile at them. Eventually, their suspicions are confirmed by a doctor's diagnosis.

Each family's situation is unique. Each parent's reaction will be different. Some parents have expressed their reactions in the following ways:

"I couldn't comprehend what had just happened to my life. Everything had been so perfect. I had a wonderful son. Then my daughter was born and she was so beautiful. And then the doctor told me she was blind and I felt like someone had pulled the rug out from under me. I couldn't work for several days. I just couldn't concentrate. I couldn't look people in the face. I didn't know what to say."

"I didn't want to think about it, yet I couldn't think about anything else. Part of me kept saying, 'It can't be true. He can't be blind.'"

"I love my baby so much. It breaks my heart to think that anything might be wrong."

"I found myself working longer hours and I didn't realize I was doing this, but I just didn't want to come home."

The kinds of feelings that you have in response to your child's visual impairment may be confusing. Feelings of shock, helplessness, fear, denial, depression, sadness, anger, guilt, disappointment, and uncertainty are natural and may come with such intensity that they overwhelm you. Many parents have called this time a "mourning period" because the feeling of sadness is so acute. As one mother said:

"I was so confused. What I expected to be the happiest time of my life turned out to be the saddest."

Unfortunately, there are no short-cuts to avoiding or lessening the pain that you may feel. But as one parent said:

"As time goes on, a lot of the feelings change just because time makes you feel better. I still hurt but I don't have the questions all the time. I've learned that there are no stock answers that help get us through. What helped me was knowing that there ARE other people who felt the same way I did."

"I was so confused.

*What I expected to be
the happiest time
in my life turned out
to be the saddest."*





Following a diagnosis of visual loss, many parents experience what they call a “roller coaster” of feelings. This is a period of many emotional ups and downs, when feelings seem to change from one hour to the next, often without apparent reason.

“I would stand in my baby’s room watching him sleep, listening to him breathe, and the feelings of love were so strong, so incredible. Then I’d be washing the dishes and start crying all of a sudden. When my phone rang and it was the wrong number, I became furious at this person I didn’t even know, and then my oldest daughter came home from school and said, ‘What’s for dinner, mom?’ and I felt like I didn’t even have the energy to answer her, much less cook dinner.”

We believe that Roller Coaster Days are a natural reaction to a major change in your lives and parents have described many feelings during this time. Although we will describe these feelings one at a time, they don’t occur one at a time or in any particular order. This confusion is what makes Roller Coaster Days so hard. Some parents talked about their feelings of sadness:

“Everything made me cry. I felt that I would never be happy again.”

Many parents experienced feelings of depression:

“For me, it was not wanting to get out of bed. I just wanted to stay there under the covers. I didn’t want to move into the day and get things done. It was hard to get my hair brushed...to do just the normal things. There wasn’t any hope sometimes.”

Other parents felt numb:

“Total shock! I don’t even remember the drive home from the hospital.”

Some parents’ feelings about their religion changed or deepened during this time:

“I just don’t believe in religion anymore because why would anyone do this to an infant?”

“I never gave up on God. This isn’t a fluke. There must be a reason. I don’t understand it, but God does.”

Some parents bury themselves in their work so that there is little time or energy left to think about other things:

“I’d wake up at 4:30 in the morning and go to the office and stay until 7:00 or 8:00 at night. I ran myself ragged just to put my mind onto other things.”

Some parents spent time searching for a “miracle” cure:

“I went from doctor to doctor, thinking that if I could just find the right one, Jimmy would see. Then I took out the Yellow Pages and called every agency dealing with blind people, thinking that someone must know something to help us.”

In addition, ALL parents have said that they had an overwhelming need to search for a reason during this time:

*“I found myself
working longer hours
and didn’t realize
I was doing this,
but I just didn’t want
to come home.”*

“The question ‘why’ is always in the back of my mind. Am I to blame? Are we to blame? When you’re looking for answers, you’re always thinking, ‘Was it my husband or was it me?’ I can’t help thinking, ‘Gee, I could have married what’s-his-name. If I hadn’t married my husband, this might not have happened.’”

“When I was pregnant, I moved the furniture.”

“There were various medications I was taking for nausea. They took one of them off the market. I often wonder, ‘Why did they take it off the market?’ and was that the reason?”

"When I was pregnant with John, I couldn't quit work. We had no insurance and I sometimes think maybe I could have taken it easier and not worried about the money. When I'm alone I start blaming myself."

It is natural to look for reasons to explain your child's blindness. When a painful event occurs, we all feel that we could bear the pain if we could understand why it happened, if we could make sense of something so senseless. When we're feeling lost, we all want a road map and "answers" seem to provide the needed map. For some people, medical explanations are helpful; for others, religious beliefs provide comfort; but for the vast majority of parents, there are no satisfying answers which relieve the pain or diminish the feeling that "life is not fair."

Coming to terms with your child's visual loss is a gradual process—one which takes different directions and different amounts of time. Many parents talk about their feelings of anger during this period. Sometimes, you may direct your anger toward your spouse and afterwards feel guilty because the outburst was unjustified. Friends and relatives who fail to comfort you or meet your needs may provoke your anger:

"My mom came over to help me reorganize my kitchen cupboards soon after Robin was born. I know now that she was only trying to be helpful but pretty soon, we got into a huge fight about where the glasses should go and I just blasted her. I was so upset, so angry. I felt like I wasn't a "good enough" mother or daughter. I know now that I was angry about my situation...about Robin's blindness...and my poor mom just happened to be standing in my kitchen that day."

"I know the doctor thought he was being comforting when he told us that Tracey was blind, but I don't think he knew how upset my wife and I were. He gave us the news and then he left. I wish he would have stayed with us for a while, or come back to see how we were doing, or given us suggestions about what to do next."

"I'm ashamed to admit this, but sometimes I was even angry at my baby for being blind. I know that doesn't make sense because I love him so much."

"I never admitted it to anybody but when I'd see somebody who was pregnant around the same time my wife was, and then I'd see their normal baby, I was jealous and angry."

"I'm convinced that the doctors and nurses did everything they could, but I still feel angry because I can't help thinking that there must be something they could have done which would have prevented this from happening."

The question which naturally arises is, "What can we do to make ourselves feel better?" Parents have said that in the beginning, they simply had to let the feelings run their course. However erratic, however unpredictable these feelings are, it is important to remember that this IS a roller coaster time—feelings change from one minute to the next. But gradually the roller coaster slows down. And as time passes, there will be longer stretches of time when the feelings settle down. Roller coaster days are not forever. As one mother said:

"I would never have believed that life could return to normal, but it has. I'm actually able to clean my house, go grocery shopping, and go out to dinner with my husband without being upset and distracted all the time. But when I was in the middle of those feelings, it felt like it would last forever. Of course, there are still times when something happens, like her birthday party or a school conference, when all the old feelings come rushing back. But it is never as bad now as it was in the beginning."

For all parents, bringing home a new baby changes their lives forever. As new parents, moments arise each day when you doubt your abilities and question the rightness of your actions. Sometimes, the feeling of responsibility for this new little person can be totally overwhelming and the question, "Am I being a good parent?" becomes an all too familiar one.

When your baby is visually impaired, your doubts and anxiety may be even greater and sometimes it may feel as though there is nowhere to turn:

"I called my pediatrician and asked him what I should do. He's really wonderful, but he was at a total loss. He said that in his thirty years of practice, he had never known a blind infant. I asked him lots of questions—'How will she learn to crawl?' 'How will she learn to dress herself?' And he said, 'If you find out, please let me know.' That was really scary."

"Was my baby crying all the time because all babies do this, or because he was blind?"

The birth of a baby is like any other important event in life—if affects the way we feel about ourselves. When good things happen—a job promotion or unexpected salary bonus—we feel good about ourselves. When bad things happen—loss of a job or birth of a handicapped baby—we tend to feel badly about ourselves. Our children are extensions of ourselves, so it's not surprising that many parents have said that the birth of their visually impaired baby altered the way they felt about themselves:

"My body doesn't work right."

"There's something wrong with me. All my sisters have normal babies and I don't."

Parents have also expressed that the birth of their baby can temporarily affect their marriage. The strain of new and uncertain responsibilities as parents may take time and energy away from your marital relationship. At this time, you may need your partner more than ever but it may be difficult to provide love and support for each other. At a time when you are both upset, you may feel that you have nothing left to give, no time left to listen, no energy to give of yourself, no strength left to support each other. Parents have said:

"It puts a big strain on the marriage. We were talking to each other rationally but we never sat down and cried together. We thought we had to be strong for the other person."

"During this time, it seemed like we were on different wave lengths...some days I felt a little better and she was overcome. Other days I was totally wiped out and she seemed O.K."

"Sex was the last thing on my mind during that time. I felt guilty. I felt how can I think about that when I have this little baby in the other room who can't see?"

The process of grieving and recovery is a very personal one. We all bring individual strengths and weaknesses to the task of facing painful situations and we all have a personal style of expressing feelings. As parents have said:

"We were both under a tremendous strain and we needed to be patient with each other. I had to remember that even though he wasn't showing feelings in the same way, it didn't mean he wasn't feeling. We needed to have lots of time all alone with each other when we weren't talking about our baby. We talked about what made the marriage work before and remembered the value of it. That's what you can't get from anybody but your spouse. It's what we had together that made us want to have our baby in the first place."

"Because we stuck together and got through that time together, we have that common bond."

During this time, it is helpful to find people with whom you can talk. Talking with your spouse, with friends, family, hospital social workers, local clergymen, your pediatric ophthalmologist, other parents of handicapped children, national agencies such as the Blind Childrens Center (213) 664-2153 and the National Association for Parents of the Visually Impaired (512) 459-6651 can all provide support and assistance.

Out In The World... The Supermarket Syndrome

Parents invented the expression "Supermarket Syndrome" to express what often happens between strangers and parents of blind children in the supermarket and other public places.

The reactions of strangers vary. Some comments will be kind and well-intentioned, while others will be tactless and rude. Strangers' questions and reactions will affect you in different ways on different days:

"People come up to me in the market and say, 'Oh, is your baby sleepy?' That's because her eyes are droopy and she doesn't hold her head up very well. Some days I say, 'Yeah, she's sleepy,' and go about my business. Other days I say, 'She's not sleepy. She can't see.'"

"I couldn't believe what this woman said! First she asked, 'What's the matter with his eyes?' Then she said, 'What did you do wrong when you were pregnant?' Can you imagine that she said that to me, a perfect stranger?? Then she just kept asking all these questions. I left my shopping cart in the middle of the frozen foods and just took my baby out to the car. I wanted to get out of there as quickly as possible and get away from her."

"We were in the park and two ladies were sitting on the bench. I could tell that they were talking about Tommy because they kept pointing and staring. Sometimes what people don't say is worse than what they do say."

"Another mother with a baby was standing behind me in the check-out line and we started talking. She went on and on about how cute Steven is, but I could tell she wanted to ask me about his eyes. Finally, I said, 'Steven just started crawling, which is terrific, since many blind babies don't like to do that.' She smiled and said how great that was! Then we compared notes about our children's favorite foods!"

Friends, relatives and strangers say many different things when they learn that your baby is blind. Often, they feel at a total loss and their well-intended remarks will seem awkward or unsympathetic. For some parents, comments such as, "You're so strong. God chose you to be Sally's parents," will provide comfort. For other parents, this remark might seem as though people don't understand how difficult the situation really is. As parents have said:

"When I talk to friends, it feels like they're playing down my difficulties. When they say, 'It could be worse' I think, 'No, it couldn't.'"

"Sometimes I get so upset when I hear, 'You're a terrific, super-parent.' I don't like to hear that. That doesn't make me feel better because it ignores how I feel about having a blind child. I don't want to be a super-mom. I just want to be a regular parent of a regular baby."

*"The hardest thing
I ever had to say was,
'my child is blind.'"*

It may be hard to talk about your special situation with people who have never experienced the same kind of thing. Although friends and relatives wish to provide comfort and support, they may be uncertain about what to say or do. As one parent said:





“I wish my friends would just sit with me and let me cry. I wish they would say, ‘This must be so hard for you.’”

You might not know how to tell parents and relatives about your baby’s diagnosis. This is very natural because at a time when you are experiencing sadness, it may be difficult to deal with their reactions as well. Many families felt it best to tell relatives as soon as possible. Parents who waited said that their anticipation created more anxiety for them than actually telling the news to their relatives.

It is natural to want and need support from everybody during this time. Giving people concrete suggestions can be helpful for you AND for them. You can ask a friend to: inform everybody about your baby’s condition (so that you do not have to make the phone calls); run errands; babysit your other children and take them to school; accompany you on doctors’ visits; cook meals; provide you with some time off. Allowing friends and family to help you is a beneficial two-way street: some of your daily responsibilities will be lessened, and the people who care will be able to help.

In addition, our parents have found it valuable to meet other parents of blind children. Sharing thoughts and experiences with people who have felt and been through the same thing can provide reassurance:

“The first time I talked to another mom with a blind child, she said, ‘I can’t think of anything worse that could happen to somebody.’ When she said that, I thought, ‘Yeah, she really understands how I feel.’”

“I had never even seen another blind child before. Then I met other parents with older blind children and saw that these kids do ride bikes and learn to get around by themselves. That really gave me lots of hope. I even thought, ‘Well, Kelly will grow up and get married some day.’”

11

Through the years, parents find their own ways to deal with family, friends, and strangers. As with Roller Coaster Days, the feelings and responses you have in various situations will change from day to day. But as one parent said:

“Whatever response feels comfortable on a given day IS the right response.”

With The Passage Of Time...

We wanted *Heart to Heart* to be a description, not a prescription, of many feelings which parents have experienced. You may have felt one of the feelings, or some of the feelings on any given day. But ALL parents say that “time does heal” and life does return to normal.

There Will Come A Time...

- when you can laugh again
- when you will not be constantly preoccupied with unanswered questions and doubts
- when you will want to find a good babysitter so that you and your spouse can spend time together, alone
- when you will begin to seek out available resources in your community such as the “Y,” Red Cross babysitting services, parent organizations
- when you will rejoice and celebrate your child’s accomplishments
- when you will think about your child as a *child* first, and as a blind child second

And Finally...

Dear Everybody,

Katie just came home from school, spilling over with smiles and chatter, smelling of sunshine. She looks so beautiful and my heart is filled with love and pride. For a moment, I find myself thinking, "I wish she could see how beautiful she looks!" But today, this wish is just one of many fleeting "mother wishes" spoken silently through the course of a regular day ("I wish she would clean up her room..." "I hope she remembers to bring her sweater home..." "I hope she has fun at Melanie's birthday party...").

Katie is ten years old and she is totally blind. We have grown together and passed through many memorable landmarks together—all the usual ones (first tooth, first steps by herself, first word spoken) and the not-so-usual ones as well (first eye surgery, first mobility lesson).

With time and patience, all the hard work has paid off. Her accomplishments are sometimes astounding, and today I believe that Katie can do anything and reach any goal she might wish to attain. She has developed her own set of strengths and her own special way of reacting to her world.

The despair and uncertainty that my husband and I felt when we first learned that Katie was blind now seem like a bad dream that happened to somebody else. Ten years ago, I never would have believed that I could feel this good, but I do!

With much love,

KATIE'S PARENTS

Design Firm: Michael Brock Design

Photography: Ken Chernus

Typography: Headliners/Identicolor, Inc.



BLIND CHILDRENS CENTER

4120 Marathon Street

P.O. Box 29159

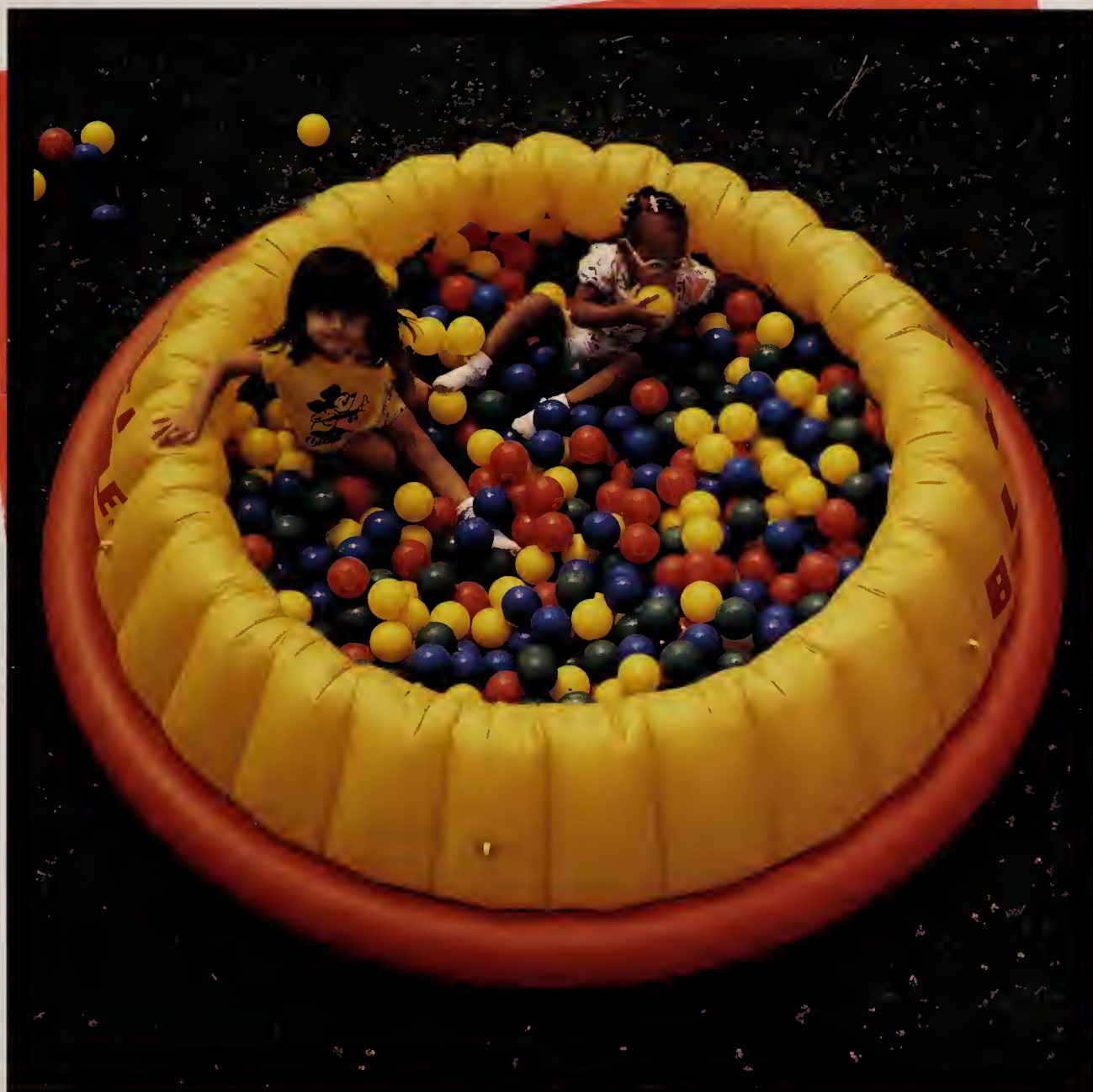
Los Angeles, California 90029

213 / 664-2153

This booklet also available in Spanish



E A R N I N G T O P L A Y



Common Concerns for the Visually Impaired Preschool Child

INTRODUCTION

Parents and professionals agree that play is an important and necessary part of children's development. Through play, children have the opportunity to learn and practice new skills at their own pace.  Different factors influence the way a child plays, such as his individual temperament, his activity level, and the kinds of toys and games he likes best. Over time, each child develops his own style of playing. There is no one "right" way to play—the important thing is that children enjoy doing it.  For most children, play seems to come naturally; it doesn't need to be taught. Sighted children learn by watching and imitating what others are doing. They learn how to relate to objects and people through their many opportunities for what we call "incidental learning," or learning how things are done simply because they can see them happening in the course of their daily activities.  Visually impaired children don't have the same opportunities for incidental learning, nor do they have the ability to readily imitate the behavior of others. They often need more time and extra help to learn what to do with toys and how to interact with people.  We have found that certain play situations seem to be especially difficult for children who do not see. In this booklet we will focus on three areas: exploring toys and materials, making transitions from one activity to another, and playing with other children. We will discuss why these areas sometimes pose problems for blind children and we will share some of the suggestions we've gathered over the years from parents and professionals.

SUSAN L. RECCHIA, M.A.
Infant Specialist
Blind Childrens Center
Los Angeles, California

EXPLORING TOYS AND MATERIALS



Eddie sat on his blanket surrounded by a variety of colorful infant toys, chewing on his leather shoe. Each morning his babysitter was careful to provide different toys for him. She had learned how important it was to make sure that blind children had something to do with their hands so they wouldn't get bored. Eddie's babysitter knew that most 12 month-old babies were very interested in exploring different toys. But no matter how interesting she tried to make the toys for Eddie, he invariably ended up chomping on that old leather baby shoe. She was beginning to feel like it wasn't worth the time to try to give Eddie special toys when all he cared to do was suck on his shoe anyway. Why not just give him the shoe and be done with it?

Like many visually impaired infants, particularly those who are totally blind, Eddie has found a favorite thing to explore and is "stuck" on it. Though his shoe may not seem like an appropriate plaything to his babysitter, the shoe does have some very appealing qualities for him: it starts out on his foot and he always knows where to find it; it is made of leather, and has a texture, taste and smell of its own, different from most plastic infant toys; it may have little eyelets made of metal and cloth shoe-laces which can be chewed and pulled on; it has an outside and an inside part, which nicely accommodates his hand or fingers. These may be some reasons why Eddie is so interested in his shoe. But what really concerns his babysitter is Eddie's disinterest in everything else.

Eddie's lack of interest in different toys is common for many blind babies. Designed to be visually enticing or to help coordinate movements between the hand and the eye, most infant toys have little meaning or appeal for blind children. Parents have told us that their visually impaired children often prefer exploring household objects, particularly those made of wood or metal. To a young child, the taste and feel of an object and the fun noises it can make, are much more important than its actual use.

Even the most appealing objects may not motivate a visually impaired baby to reach out and explore as a sighted child would. Blind babies often don't begin new activities on their own, which makes it hard for their parents to know when they are becoming bored with an old routine or if they are ready to play with other toys. We have found that most blind babies must be given extra time and help to discover what and where their toys are and what they can do with them.

When your visually impaired baby is first learning to bat at objects, help him to stay in touch with his toys by fastening them to his crib or hanging them overhead, within his reach. Allow him time to discover and rediscover the same toys in the same places so that his play environment becomes more predictable. Let your baby hold and touch a rattle or bell before you try to entice him to reach for it, so that he knows what it is that's making the sound.

Infants play for a longer time and with greater interest when adults give them feedback about their play activities. For a blind child this becomes especially important because he cannot see the toys available to him or the



*Many visually impaired children
are reluctant to sink
their hands into gooey textures
such as this shaving cream.*



effect that his actions have on them. Take some time each day to sit with your child as he plays, talking with him about what he's doing: "You've found those keys again, Michael. Don't they feel cold against your cheek? You like to taste them too. Oh, such cold, hard keys in your mouth!" You can also help your child to make connections between one toy and another, and to move from one activity to another: "Those keys are made of cold, hard metal just like your little metal cup. Let's find that cup."



It's important to remember that your blind child cannot really understand how a toy works without being shown in a way that makes sense to him. At first, you can take his hand in yours, helping him to reach out and explore the toy. Describe the toy as he feels it, and explain how it works: "When you turn that handle on the jack-in-the-box, Joey, a clown will pop out at the top. Let's find the place where he pops out from." It may take a while for your child to discover his own enjoyable ways of playing with toys, which may not always be exactly what you had in mind. Over time, you will get used to this different way of playing, too.



Two year-old Laura sat at the table ignoring the ball of playdough in front of her. Her mother, feeling a little embarrassed that Laura seemed to be the only one in the group who completely refused to touch it, was trying her best to imitate all the techniques the teacher had shown her to encourage Laura's involvement. "Ooh, I love squishing my finger into this big glob of dough," she said. "It feels so soft and sticky, kind of like peanut butter. Let's make a ball...here it comes, rolling over to you, Laura." As soon as the ball made contact with the edge of Laura's finger, she flung up her arms, knocking the playdough to the floor and began banging her head on the table. Her mother scooped her up out of her chair, apologetically telling the others in the group that Laura had a cold and had been extra fussy over the last few days. She knew that really wasn't the reason for Laura's behavior. This seemed to happen every time a messy activity was introduced at school. Why was Laura so resistant to this, she wondered, and worse yet, why was it that she couldn't get any of the techniques which worked with the other kids to work for Laura?

Sometimes called "tactile defensiveness," this refusal of Laura's to touch messy textures is not unique to blind children, but does seem to be more common among them. Professionals often concern themselves more with the blind child's resistance to touching materials because in the absence of vision it takes on a new significance. If Laura can't see the playdough, and won't touch it, how will she ever get to know what it is or what she can possibly do with it?

Many young blind children are resistant to touching new or different textures for several reasons. Sometimes a child may associate touch with pain, particularly if she has had frequent hospitalizations or unpleasant medical interventions. Some children seem to be particularly sensitive to tactile stimulation and may be more easily irritated by certain types of textures. Others simply don't like messy activities. Whatever the reason, introducing a resistant blind child to a new texture can be difficult at first. And though a reaction like Laura's might seem unusual, from her 2-year-old point of view she feels perfectly justified in displaying her anger. Just think for a moment how it might feel to bump into a cold gushy lump of mush, or worse yet, to have someone force your hand into one against your will!

We have found that the best way to help blind children get used to touching different textures is to introduce them to a variety of tactile experiences as early as possible. Desensitizing a toddler or preschooler who has never liked touching messy things can be difficult, and may take a very long time.

If your child is like Laura, you can help her get used to the idea of touching messy activities very slowly. You may want to start out with something less threatening than sticky playdough, such as a big bowl of dry cereal. Give her the chance to touch it, smell it, and taste it on her own, and to make a mess with it if that will get her involved. Once she is able to tolerate this, try something gooier. Don't expect her to jump into an activity like fingerpainting. You may have to start by placing just a drop of finger paint on her hand, gradually increasing the amount over time while encouraging her involvement in the process.

Laura may need lots of time to get used to this—and she may never really like doing it. Sometimes taking away the pressure of expecting her to participate makes a big difference. Once she is able to relax and stop worrying about the messy stuff being on her, she may be able to realize that the other children are having fun and she's missing out on something.

Sometimes we become so concerned about what a child won't do that we can lose perspective on how important it really is in the greater scheme of things. Whether or not Laura ever in her life touches that playdough is not really going to make a whole lot of difference. What does matter, though, is how Laura ultimately feels about using tactile exploration in new situations.

MAKING TRANSITIONS FROM ONE ACTIVITY TO ANOTHER

Billy, 18 months, has been blind since birth. He and his mother have been attending a Mommy and Me class for the last several months with a group of sighted infants and their mothers. Music time is Billy's favorite part of the class. He knows that it always comes after snack and before recess. His mother really enjoys singing the songs and playing the finger-games with him. But each time music comes to an end, Billy falls apart. While the other kids are getting ready to go outside, Billy usually cries and refuses to give up his favorite tambourine. His mother feels that it's important that he follows the school routine, but sometimes she wishes she could just let him sing and play the instruments for as long as he wants to. Then she wouldn't have to go through this struggle every time.

Though most young children have trouble making transitions at one stage or another, for blind children this seems to be particularly difficult. At 18 months, Billy probably has a hard time understanding why he has to end music and go on to something else.

The other children in Billy's class may enjoy music time as much as he does, but they have the advantage of being able to see what the next activity is, and that everyone else is preparing to do it. This added incentive acts as a wonderful distraction, and makes the transition easier. From Billy's point of view, this change signals both the end of his favorite activity and an onslaught of confusion. Going out to the playground takes so much more work than sitting in his little chair inside. No wonder he doesn't want music



*It takes time, preparation,
and practice to end
a favorite activity
gracefully.*

time to stop. Merely hearing his mother describe the “fun” that lies ahead at recess hardly makes up for ending an enjoyable activity.

Though Billy may never make this transition with enthusiasm, there are some ways to make it easier for him. Preparing him before the transition takes place might help him get used to the idea, even if he doesn't like it. Try to actively involve him in the process so that he feels that he has more control over the situation. During snack say something like: “After we eat our crackers we're going to have music time. Then we'll go out to play.” Before the last song you might remind him again: “After we sing Row, Row, Row Your Boat it'll be time to put on your sweater to go out to play.” After the song, it might help if you have his sweater ready, rather than expecting him to go find it when he's already having such a hard time. Again, taking things one step at a time seems to work best.

Some children have an easier time if they can hold onto a transitional object of some kind, like a small toy that goes outside with them each day. Instead of struggling with Billy to take away his tambourine, offer the toy as a replacement to help him prepare to go outdoors: “Here's your car, Billy. We can take that outside with us and play with it like we did last week.”

Three year-old Melanie was busy playing with her favorite toy when her mother came into the room with her jacket and hat. “Come on, Melanie, time to go pick up your brother at school. We've got to hurry so we won't be late.” When she took Melanie's arm to help her on with her jacket, Melanie wrenched it away from her and continued playing. Melanie's mother placed the toy aside and took Melanie onto her lap. Melanie began to tantrum, kicking and screaming “toy, toy.” “Oh honey, I know you want your toy, but we really have to go now. You can play with it later when we get home.” Melanie continued to tantrum as her mother took her kicking and screaming to the car, wrestled her into her carseat, and sped over to school. By the time they got home, Melanie was still crying and her mother felt frustrated and angry. “Why does it always have to be like this?” she asked herself. “Melanie just doesn't seem to understand that things can't always be her way!”

This scene might sound familiar to many parents. Melanie has been going along to pick up her brother after school every day for months, and her mother feels she should be used to it by now. From Melanie's perspective, however, not only is her activity being ended abruptly by someone else, but she is also being forced to do something that she really doesn't want to do.

Blind children tend to be more resistant to change in general than their sighted peers. Change means going from the known to the unknown when you don't have the advantage of seeing the signals that prepare you for what will happen next. Sighted children depend on visual cues to help prepare them for what's to come. Think of all the additional information that would be available to Melanie if she could see. As her mother entered the room, she would see that she had her own jacket on, and perhaps her purse and car keys in hand. She would see that her mother was holding her jacket, a sure sign of preparing to go outdoors. She would probably know from the look on her mother's face that she was in a hurry. Though all of this information eventually came to Melanie through her other senses, she missed out on the advance warning that the sighted child would have had. She didn't





have the same opportunity to prepare herself for what soon would be expected of her.



It isn't possible to prepare your child for every transition that she might have to make throughout the day. Sometimes we have to change or stop our activities mid-stream without any advance warning. But when you do have the time, a little preparation can make a big difference in how your child will respond to a change. Just giving Melanie some advance notice by saying, "In ten minutes it will be time to put away your toy and get ready to pick up your brother at school," would be a good place to start. It might also be helpful to give her a small timer that you can set together, and let her be in charge of telling you when it goes off. Then go together to get your jackets so that she is involved in the process of preparing to leave. Melanie might like to have a special toy to bring along, or a tape to listen to in the car. Just as a sighted child might watch the same familiar sights along the way, Melanie will be establishing her own familiar routine for the drive to school.



It might also make it easier for Melanie to leave with you if she is given a stronger sense that she will be able to return to her favorite toy. You might say something like: "Let's put your special music box right over here on the table so we're sure to know where to find it when we come home." Then be sure to remind her of where it is after your return, so she'll know that when you tell her she can have it again later, you mean what you say.

Don't be discouraged if your attempts don't seem to be effective at first. It may take some time and practice before you find what works best for you and your particular child. There may be times when you feel you don't have the patience to deal with all this preparation. And there will most definitely be times when your child doesn't either. Over time, it will become easier to tell when she can best respond to this type of direction, and when she may just be too tired or crabby to deal with it. As one mother so aptly put it, "Sometimes we have to just forget about how we'd like things to be going, and go take a nap."

PLAYING WITH OTHER CHILDREN

Mrs. Howard was looking forward to seeing her three closest friends and their children. Her 3½ year-old daughter Jenny loved being with the other kids, but sometimes she had a hard time keeping up with them. Mrs. Howard knew that the other children didn't really understand about Jenny's blindness. She couldn't expect them to play differently because of her. The last time they came to visit, Jenny ended up playing quietly with her tape-recorder in the corner, while the other three children played together. After awhile she came to find her mother and kept asking the same questions over and over again just to get her attention. Mrs. Howard wished that for once she could enjoy talking with her friends while her child played happily with the others. But at the same time, she knew that it was hard for Jenny to understand what they were playing, and she wished she could do something to make it easier for her.



have found that many parents of visually impaired children share Mrs. Howard's feelings. Though their children may play adequately when they're alone or with an adult, sometimes they shy away from groups of children, or behave in ways that make other children shy away from them.

When blind and sighted children play together, they may need extra time to familiarize themselves with each other's style of playing. The quick, unpredictable movements of sighted children can be disorienting, perhaps even frightening at times for a blind child. It's hard to prepare for unexpected bumps, or to know what they mean. Blind children often respond more slowly to new activities, which may cause a sighted child to lose interest. Different children play in different ways. Some children are able to size up a situation and join in easily. Others may have a harder time doing this on their own. Exactly how you go about helping your child to play with other children will depend on her particular needs and your individual style of interacting with her.

Your child and her sighted playmates can all benefit from your support. A simple statement like, "I always tell Mary when I'm going to throw her the ball because she can't see that it's coming," can give both children a framework for playing together. It lets your child know that she doesn't have to worry about the ball coming at her out of nowhere, and it cues her sighted friend to use words to describe what he's about to do before he does it. Saying something like, "It's okay if Mary just listens now. Maybe she'll join in a little later," can help a sighted child understand that your child may not respond to him the way that other sighted children do at first.

When your child has successful experiences playing with other children, she'll be more motivated to do it again. Extra input from you can help to make the play situation less threatening. Keep the first play experiences short; set up situations with just one other child; and be available to "interpret" for both children until they become more comfortable on their own. In these ways, you can help to make your child's interactions easier.

Mr. and Mrs. Blackburn were delighted that their son Jeremy had been invited to his friend Tommy's fourth birthday party. Jeremy, blind since birth, hadn't had too many opportunities to be with sighted children. Since he was an infant he'd been attending classes at the preschool for the blind, where he seemed to enjoy playing with the other children. But there weren't many children his age in the neighborhood, until Tommy moved in across the street several months ago. The Blackburns had really tried hard to get the boys together for short periods of time when Mr. or Mrs. Blackburn could sit with them and help them play together, as Jeremy's teacher had suggested. It had been working out very well and it seemed that Tommy and Jeremy were beginning to play together on their own a little longer each time. On the day of the party, Jeremy seemed very excited about going. He talked about Tommy's party all morning. He knew they'd have cake and ice-cream, and would play games and open presents. But



when he got to Tommy's, he was very reluctant to have his daddy leave. He seemed overwhelmed by all of the children and when Tommy told him it was time to play musical chairs, he burst into tears. Mr. Blackburn tried to cajole Jeremy into joining in the fun, but Jeremy continued to cry until his father took him home.



Though Jeremy may have been to Tommy's house before, this time the furniture may be rearranged, there are lots of people, and it is probably much noisier than usual. Birthday parties like Tommy's can be confusing for any child, but being able to see what's causing the confusion makes it much easier to understand. There may be a birthday cake and presents, games and a table set with paper plates and napkins with a familiar child's motif. All of these things give the sighted child a sense of what will happen. For Jeremy, there is mostly the noise and confusion.



Though the Blackburns did their best to prepare Jeremy for Tommy's party, and though Jeremy may have seemed very excited about going, the reality of being there was a little more overwhelming than he had expected. Group events like birthday parties can be very overstimulating, even for sighted children. Most parents are confronted with a situation like this during the preschool years, but parents of visually impaired children seem to have to deal with this for a much longer period of time. It's often difficult to decide when to give your children that extra push toward independence and let them try to handle a new situation on their own.

Before you expect your child to play in a larger group, be sure to provide a lot of opportunities for him to have fun with just one or two children. You might begin by having him play with one friend for 10 minutes in his own backyard. Work up to a trip with the same friend to a nearby park, where you can watch them play among other children in a new surrounding. You can help prepare your child by telling him what to expect from a new situation ahead of time: "Tomorrow we'll be going to Sally's house to play. She has a new baby brother who cries sometimes. He's too little to know how to talk yet."

Sometimes simply describing what a place will be like or what will happen there won't be enough to put your child at ease. He may not feel comfortable at first going into a new situation alone. When it comes time for him to be part of a larger group, let him know that you will stay with him if he wants you to. Knowing that you are close by, "just in case," can be very reassuring. After the first few times, try leaving for 10 or 15 minutes, gradually adding more time as he gets more comfortable. Be sure to tell him when you are leaving, where you'll be, and when you'll be back.

It takes time for blind children to gain the skills and the confidence they need to enjoy playing with other children. Learning to find the right words to express their feelings and to ask for what they want takes lots of practice. In some situations this will be easier than in others. The important thing is that your child knows that with your help he can learn to do it on his own.



*Sometimes a blind child
needs extra time
to become comfortable
playing with other children.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The ideas expressed in this booklet are the result of a cooperative effort, and there are many people we wish to thank. We are most appreciative of the families who have participated in the programs at the Blind Childrens Center. Their insights and experiences have taught us so much.  Special thanks to the staff members at the Blind Childrens Center. Their comments and help have made this booklet more meaningful and they are greatly appreciated.  Our deepest appreciation goes to The Karl Kirchgessner Foundation and Rev. Patrick Cahalan, S.J. The generosity and commitment of everyone involved with the Foundation have enabled us to make "Learning to Play" available to parents and professionals throughout the world.  In addition, we would like to thank the Margaret Bundy Scott Trust for enabling us to compile and computerize an international mailing list so that people in fifty states and sixty-seven countries can receive all booklets published by the Blind Childrens Center.  The Blind Childrens Center offers a program of diversified services which meets the special needs of blind and partially sighted children (from birth to seven years of age), their parents, and siblings. Services include: Infant Stimulation Program; Mom & Me Groups; Therapeutic Pre-school Program; Residential Program; Computer-Enhanced Speech and Language Program; Multi-Handicapped Program; Psychiatric Counseling; Educational Correspondence Program; National Toll Free Phone Line; Internship Opportunities; Research and Publication Program.  The Blind Childrens Center is a non-profit organization available to visually handicapped children regardless of race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex or religion. Founded in 1938, the Blind Childrens Center is a philanthropic project of the Southern California Delta Gamma. The Blind Childrens Center receives no state or federal financial assistance.

A FINAL WORD...

The information provided in this booklet is based on our experience with many visually impaired children and their families, but you know your child best. You may have other concerns about your child's play that are not covered in this booklet. If you feel that your child's play behavior is unusual, or that he persists in repetitive play behaviors that you find difficult to understand, talk it over with his teacher, doctor, or therapist. If you would like any more information, please feel free to call us at the Blind Childrens Center, (213) 664-2153. 



BLIND CHILDRENS CENTER
4120 Marathon Street
P.O. Box 29159
Los Angeles, California 90029
213/664-2153

MOVE WITH ME



A Parents' Guide to Movement Development for Visually Impaired Babies

INTRODUCTION

BABIES WITH a serious visual loss often prefer their world to be constant and familiar. Therefore, they tend to resist change, and this includes changes in position. Many parents have told us that their visually impaired babies only enjoy lying on their backs. From the very beginning, then, it is important to introduce a wide range of movement activities to your visually impaired baby. The earlier we start and the more appealing we make these activities, the more comfortable your baby will be when trying new positions.

Timing is important and an understanding of how your baby's muscles develop will help you know when your baby is physically ready to move in different ways. Your baby's muscles develop slowly, over the course of many months but the rate at which development occurs varies somewhat according to your baby's individual "time clock," personality and whether your baby was born prematurely.

Visually impaired babies have the same potential to learn movements as sighted babies. We all have an abundance of "guiding systems" which we use to orient ourselves in space. Vision is only one such system. Therefore, we must help visually impaired babies tune into their other "guiding systems" early on. If we don't tune into these systems, delays usually occur in certain areas such as crawling and walking. Additionally, movement skills may become less fluid than sighted babies. It's important for you to provide additional help so that your baby strengthens the necessary muscles and develops his other senses in order to acquire the necessary self confidence and a good sense of balance to encourage more fluid movement skills.

This booklet offers a variety of ways for you to promote your baby's movement development. The suggestions are meant to be guidelines and we hope that you will use them in ways that work best for you and your baby. In EVERYTHING you do with your baby, the two words to remember are "TALK" and "CUDDLE" because your voice and touch are the two most soothing ways to comfort and reassure your baby. It is important to practice these activities SLOWLY, GENTLY, and A FEW MINUTES AT A TIME. A few minutes several times a day is a good guideline.

If you are concerned about trying any of the suggested activities or if your baby is multi-handicapped, please consult your pediatrician or physical therapist. In the beginning, your baby may be unsure about the new activities. But as time passes, he will become more comfortable trying new things and your active involvement helps lay the foundation for your baby's future development. Most of all, we hope that you have fun together and that these activities become part of the ways in which you normally and naturally play with your baby and attend to your baby's needs.

DORIS HUG, M.S., R.P.T.
Pediatric Physical Therapist
Santa Monica, California

NANCY CHERNUS-MANSFIELD, M.A.
Executive Director
Blind Childrens Center
Los Angeles, California

DORI HAYASHI, M.A.
Director of Development
Blind Childrens Center
Los Angeles, California

CHAPTER ONE

The First Few Months of Life...

IF YOUR BABY WAS BORN PREMATURELY, THERE ARE SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS. PLEASE SEE THE SECTION ENTITLED, "YOUR PREMATURE BABY" AT THE END OF THIS CHAPTER BEFORE YOU READ CHAPTER ONE.

WHEN FULL-TERM babies emerge into the world, they are tightly curled up little bundles. For the last three months in the womb, your baby was increasingly compressed and bent. When he's born, he begins to feel the effects of gravity on his body. Slowly, his muscles begin to straighten and the muscles responsible for extension (straightening) become stronger.

Newborns are also totally asymmetrical (their neck muscles are not yet strong enough for them to hold their heads in the middle of their body as they lie on their back). After the first few months, the baby outgrows certain natural infantile reflexes which occur in all newborns, and he learns to balance his muscles so that the head and trunk become symmetrical (head held in the center of his body). Symmetry is an important accomplishment for all future movements because when a baby's head is positioned in the center of the body, he will get a much better sense of balance when sitting up, standing, and walking. Symmetry is also important for developing a healthy spine.

Keeping the natural developmental sequence in mind and considering the particular vulnerabilities of the visually impaired baby, we will provide suggestions in the first chapter with three goals in mind:

We want to introduce different positions (lying on his tummy, side and back) so that your baby begins to be comfortable in all positions. WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT: Our experience has shown us that visually impaired babies often get into the habit of only enjoying lying on their backs. These babies prefer their world to be unchanging and familiar. Therefore, they resist change, and this includes changes in position. One of the ways we see this reluctance to move most clearly is that visually impaired babies seek to be "grounded"—that is, they like to put as much of their body surface against the mattress as possible. Some babies exaggerate this by actively pressing into the supporting surface. Unfortunately, babies don't learn very much, or strengthen the

wrong muscles as they lie on the back. And as time passes, babies become increasingly more resistant to moving away from the mattress into space. This reluctance may delay future movement experiences.

We want to introduce activities which encourage your baby's muscles to relax and straighten so that over the next few months, he goes from a curled up little bundle to lying flat and relaxed on his tummy.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT: All future movements require the ability to be both bent and extended. Since your baby has spent three months in a tucked up position in the womb, we now want to give him many opportunities to relax and lengthen his body.

We want to give your baby lots of opportunities to be "symmetrical" (that is, as he lies on his back, his head is positioned in the center of his body rather than turned to the side). WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT: Premature, blind babies and babies with low muscle tone often need help with symmetry. For example, premature babies often have immature "floppy" muscles because the muscles did not have enough time to mature in the womb. Also, extended hospitalizations contribute to asymmetry due to the necessary procedures which are performed on babies as they lie on their backs.

On My Tummy

If YOUR NEWBORN baby could talk to us, he might say,

"Why should I lie on my tummy? Let's face it. It's not as comfortable or easy as lying on my back. I can't hear as well because my ear is squashed beneath my head. It's hard work to lift up my heavy head and besides, what's the reward once I do?"



In the very beginning as she lies on her tummy, use your body as her cushion. She will hear your heartbeat, feel your warmth and the two of you will be face-to-face as you softly talk to her and stroke her back and spine. This closeness will comfort her. While she lies in this position, gently bring her arms forward a bit and gently press down on her buttocks because this makes it easier for her to lift her head.



Another good way for getting your baby used to being on her tummy is to *make a habit* out of rolling her onto her stomach for a few seconds before you pick her up. When you put your baby down, first lie her on her tummy with your hand beneath her chest for support. After a moment, gently roll her over onto her back. As she gets used to being on her tummy, gradually increase the amount of time you leave her in this position.



Place your baby on your lap with her head over your knees. A soft piece of fur or sheepskin on your lap may help her feel more secure and comfortable. Stroke her neck and spine and softly blow on her back. These little tricks will encourage her to lift her head up while lying on her stomach.

It's important to provide opportunities for your baby to lie on his stomach as early as possible. This position is a necessary first step for future accomplishments such as sitting up and crawling because his neck, back and arm muscles are being strengthened.



Once your baby is comfortable lying on her tummy using your body as a cushion, place a piece of fur or soft quilt on the floor. Lie on the floor facing her. Use your finger or her pacifier and gently rub her lips and mouth with the object, slowly changing the position of where you hold the object. This will encourage her to lift her head up and move it from side to side.



As your baby lies on her tummy, place her over a bolster (long cylindrical pillow or inflated cylindrical toy) with her head and arms extended in front of her. Cradle the bolster in your arms and gently rock her backward and forward. Place a music box or sound-making toy in front of her so that she begins to reach towards the sound as she rocks forward. Once she is comfortable with this movement, change the activity a little bit and rock her from side to side.



Sit your baby in your lap with your knees up. Fold and cup her shoulders slightly and help her bring her hands together so that she can play with them or reach for a rattle that you hold. This is a wonderful position because it allows your baby to be comfortably symmetrical (the groove created by your knees cradles your baby's head in the center of her body) and naturally encourages her to bring her hands together in the middle of her body.

Your Premature Baby

WHEN FULL-TERM babies are born, they are tightly curled up little bundles. For the last three months in the womb, the full-term baby was increasingly compressed and bent. When he's born, he begins to feel the effects of gravity and his muscles begin to straighten.

When a baby is born prematurely, he hasn't spent enough time in this fetal, tucked position so when he emerges into the world, he is "too straight." Then as gravity starts to play its part, the premature baby often becomes "hyper-extended" (TOO straight and rigid). This kind of hyper-extension can lead to your baby's arching his back which might delay his abilities to grasp and reach for objects, to sit, to roll over, and to bring his hands together. In addition, when a premature baby is in the Intensive Care Unit, he spends a lot of time on his back and this position encourages even more straightening and extension.

In the very beginning, our goal for the premature baby is to provide opportunities for him to spend lots of time in a tucked, fetal position so that he will be just as comfortable being tucked as being straight. The ability to do both is crucial for his future movement development since all movements require the body to bend and straighten. Also, once a baby becomes used to this tucked position, he tends to feel calmer and more secure.

The following activities should be done carefully, slowly, and gently. There's no rush. Take your time and introduce new positions one-at-a-time and gradually. Once your baby is comfortable being tucked, you can introduce the activities suggested in the beginning of Chapter One.



A crib cuddle is similar to a hammock and can easily be made with a large piece of material which fits over the top of a crib and is securely fastened on all four corners. The crib cuddle helps infants maintain a tucked, symmetrical position by naturally bringing your baby's hands and legs together.



Premature babies startle easily at many sounds and sudden touches and it's often difficult to calm them. This might make certain tasks such as feeding more difficult. To help your baby feel secure and calm, wrap her tightly in a blanket. This is called "swaddling" and it gives your baby a lot of information about her own body from the pressure and warmth provided by the blanket.



While your baby lies on her back, gently bring her knees up to her chest. Then bring her hands to her knees. Slowly roll her to one side while maintaining this tucked position. This activity will help your baby get used to changes in position without arching her back.

A f t e r T u m m y P l a y . . . N o w W h a t ?

WE HAVE GIVEN your baby lots of practice lying on his tummy. If he is able to lie flat and relaxed on his tummy, lift his head up in this position, and prop himself on his elbows, then it's time to try the activities suggested in this chapter. In Chapter One, the activities strengthened the muscles in his back, neck, and arms. Developmentally, the next step is to strengthen his tummy muscles. Once his tummy muscles are strong, he will be able to balance himself in more upright positions.

With this in mind, we will provide suggestions in Chapter Two with three goals in mind:

We want to introduce activities which now strengthen the muscles in the front part of your baby's body. We suggest that you play with your baby face-to-face as much as possible so that your baby gets into the habit of leaning TOWARDS you since this provides additional opportunities for strengthening the muscles in his tummy.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT: Once your baby develops the muscles in the back AND front, his body will begin to coordinate both sets which leads to increased head control, sitting up, and crawling.

We want to provide new movement activities so that your baby becomes increasingly more comfortable when moving from "A" to "B."

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT: As we mentioned in Chapter One, visually impaired babies often prefer lying on their backs and parents understandably fall into the common trap of thinking that their baby will tell them when he's ready to try new things. Many times, visually impaired babies don't tell us because they are reluctant to give up their contact with a secure, supporting surface.

We want to continually introduce activities which allow your baby to practice the skills he has already acquired as well as introduce new skills just beyond his reach.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT: For young babies, vision is the primary motivation which gets them moving. When a baby is visually impaired, we must provide the necessary incentives to get him interested in the world beyond himself. It is important to challenge your baby's abilities and encourage him to take the next step in his development.



Gently help your baby to tuck his bottom up so that his knees and feet are close to his hands. Help him reach for his feet. You might try putting a bell or sticker on his toes and encourage him to pull at it. Eventually, his tummy muscles will strengthen enough so that he can raise his own bottom and legs. This is especially important for visually impaired babies because it gives them a chance to feel their feet and legs which they cannot see.



Before your baby is able to sit by herself, she needs lots of practice sitting with support. Place your baby in a seated position on a soft, secure surface with a bolster or pillow as support. In the beginning, help your baby and hold her arms over the pillow as you gently rock her backward and forward.



Hold your baby just below her chest as she sits on your lap facing you. Gently rock her backward and forward. As time passes and she becomes steadier, you can begin to hold her less tightly so that she begins to find her own balance without very much support from you.



A bolster or large pillow can be used to encourage your baby to sit on her heels. This position is a good first step to learning how to crawl. Fold your baby's legs under her so that her buttocks rest on her heels as she supports her chest and arms on the bolster. Gently roll the bolster forward and backward, applying slight pressure downward on her hips as she rolls forward. This slight pressure prevents her from straightening her legs too much, which would make her fall forward.

M o v i n g I n t o S p a c e !

IF YOUR BABY is now comfortable sitting up (because he has learned to use both his back and tummy muscles for balance) and is comfortable being moved around in space, then it's time to try the following games. In order to move by himself, he now needs to learn how to shift his weight to the side and use his right and left sides in different or opposing ways.

In this third chapter, we will provide suggestions with two goals in mind:

We want to introduce activities which encourage your baby's ability to shift his weight from side-to-side.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT: Movement through space requires the body's ability to move backwards, forwards, and side-to-side. Without the ability to shift his weight from side-to-side, your baby will have difficulty crawling, lifting his legs to take steps, making transitions such as going from sitting to all four's, or going from all four's to standing.

We want to give your baby lots of practice extending his arms in order to catch himself as he is rolled forward, backward, and to the side on a large, inflated ball. This prepares him for protecting himself while falling as he learns to walk by himself.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT: The more your baby is able to protect himself and prevent himself from being hurt, the more confident he will be as he becomes more upright (standing up, walking) in space.



As your child lies on her back, gently pull her up by pulling on one arm a little more than the other. Show her how to support SOME of her own weight as you pull her up. In this way, she will be helping to raise herself up to a seated position. When pulled by one arm more than the other, she will also have to find and maintain her own balance, just as she would when sitting by herself. Take turns pulling on her left arm first, then her right arm. If she arches her back when she is pulled to a seated position, place one hand gently on her stomach to keep her back straight.



As your child sits on the floor, place her favorite toys to her side and show her how to reach across her body in order to find an object. This encourages her to shift her weight from side-to-side. Guide her hand and help her find the toy. You may need to gently hold her arm down on the floor that is nearest the toy to insure that she uses the opposite hand. This movement encourages weight-shifting.



Each time your child becomes comfortable with a position or activity, try to think of ways to vary her routine just a little. For example, once she can sit steadily on the floor, place her on a very low stool or the bottom step of your stairs. Hold her gently in this position. She will have to work harder to maintain her balance this way and she will have to use her ankles to balance herself—a skill that is necessary for standing and walking.



When a child is learning how to walk, she will have more confidence if she knows how to protect herself when she falls. This activity is a wonderful way to teach your child how to put her hands and arms forward in order to catch herself. Hold your child by her legs and gently roll her back and forth on a large, inflated body ball. Encourage her to hold her arms over the ball and touch the floor as you rock her forward. You may be surprised at how quickly she learns to extend her arms to catch herself before she touches the floor. With practice, your child's other "guiding systems" will take over and give her information about where she is in space.



Once your child is comfortable lying on her tummy on the ball, vary her position. Hold her arms and let her lie on her back on the ball. Roll her back and forth and side-to-side. This is an excellent activity for developing balancing skills.



Place your child in a seated position on top of the body ball. In the beginning, hold her securely around her waist or trunk. As she becomes more comfortable and begins to find her own balance, gradually decrease your support by holding her legs. Gently move your child backward and forward while on the ball. Many children also enjoy the up and down movement while sitting on the ball.



Once your child enjoys pulling up to a standing position and can support his full weight, you can begin to introduce movement. Stand him up in a sturdy cart and let him hold onto the handle as you slowly pull the cart forward. Once he is comfortable with this game, play a "Stop and Go" game so that he improves his balancing skills and develops a sense of direction.



Your child can also begin to push the cart by himself. Place a heavy object into the cart so that it is weighted down. Place your hands over his as he holds onto the handle. The cart provides just the right amount of support for a child who is learning how to take steps.



"Cruising" means side-stepping as your child walks along a piece of furniture or along the wall. This is a common and necessary way for children to begin taking steps by themselves and it prepares children for walking without support by strengthening their hip muscles. We suggest that your child be barefoot as he practices cruising since this provides additional information about his surroundings.

AS YOUR CHILD begins to cruise through your house, we suggest that you keep the furniture arrangement the same. As he cruises, he will be creating a mental map of his environment. It is important that he gain a sense of familiarity leading to increased self-confidence, curiosity and trust.

As he develops more balance and confidence, slowly decrease the amount of support you give to him as he takes steps by himself. Rather than holding his hands, hold onto the back of his overalls or the straps on his pants. In this way, his hands are free to catch himself as he falls down. As he learns the skills to protect himself, he will become more confident about his own abilities to do things independently.

You can encourage him to take his first steps by himself by placing his back against the wall or couch. Stand in front of him and use your voice or favorite sound-making toy to entice him to come to you. AND ONE SPECIAL HINT: Do NOT move backwards in order to increase the distance between you and your toddler as he steps towards you. This will confuse him and distort his sense of spatial distances.

One final note: Our experience has shown us that it sometimes takes A VERY LONG TIME for visually impaired toddlers to feel confident and safe enough to walk by themselves. Afterall, it's very scary to walk into space without being able to "size up" the situation before you plunge in. Don't be discouraged and just continue giving your toddler LOTS of practice cruising and walking with support. The time will come when he will walk by himself!

You know your baby better than anyone and it's important to trust your instincts. Be confident and be patient. If something doesn't work the first time, you can always try it another time. Your baby's initial reluctance does not mean that he won't enjoy these activities. Practice will increase your confidence and your baby's competence.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact us at the

BLIND CHILDRENS CENTER: (213) 664-2153

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THE IDEAS EXPRESSED in this booklet are the result of a cooperative effort, and there are many people we wish to thank.

We are most grateful to the parents and babies who participate in the programs at the Blind Childrens Center. They have been our best teachers!

Our deepest appreciation goes to the Margaret Bundy Scott Trust. "Move With Me" is one booklet in a series made possible through this Trust. The generosity and commitment of everyone involved with the Trust have enabled us to make this information available throughout the world.

We have been most fortunate to work closely with Doris Hug, a licensed pediatric physical therapist. Ms. Hug's expertise and extensive experience with visually impaired babies have provided us with a wealth of information and suggestions which made this booklet possible.

Special thanks to Linda Kekelis, Research Associate at the University of California, Berkeley. Her patient organization of this written material made the publication of this booklet a much easier task.

The Blind Childrens Center offers a program of diversified services which meets the special needs of blind and partially sighted children (from birth through seven years), their parents and siblings. Services include: Infant Stimulation Program; Mom & Me Groups; Therapeutic Preschool Program; Residential Program; Computer-Enhanced Speech and Language Program; Multi-Handicapped Program; Psychiatric Counseling; Educational Correspondence Program; National Toll Free Phone Line; Internship Opportunities; Research and Publication Program.

The Blind Childrens Center is a non-profit organization available to visually handicapped children regardless of race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex or religion. Founded in 1938, the Blind Childrens Center is a philanthropic project of the Southern California Delta Gamma. The Blind Childrens Center receives no state or federal financial assistance.



BLIND CHILDRENS CENTER

4120 Marathon Street

P.O. Box 29159

Los Angeles, California 90029

213/664-2153

This booklet also available in Spanish.

Reading is for Everyone.



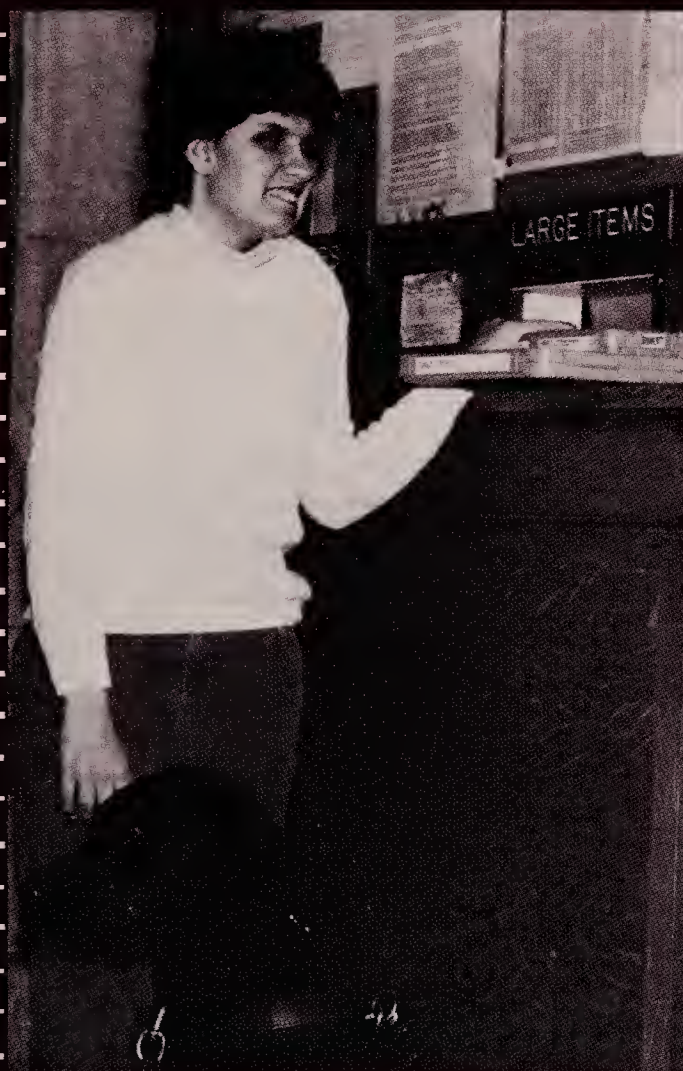
*National Library Service
for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
The Library of Congress*

RETURN TO
NYS LIBRARY F/T BLIND
& VISUALLY HANDICAPPED
CULTURAL EDUCATION CENTER
EMPIRE STATE PLAZA
ALBANY, NY 12230
TOLL FREE 1-800-342-3688

**LIBRARY FOR THE
BLIND AND VISUALLY
HANDICAPPED**

N Y S
LIBRARY

**FOR THE BLIND AND
VISUALLY HANDICAPPED**

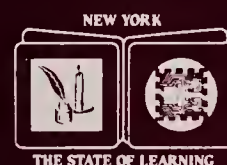


(518) 474-5935

or

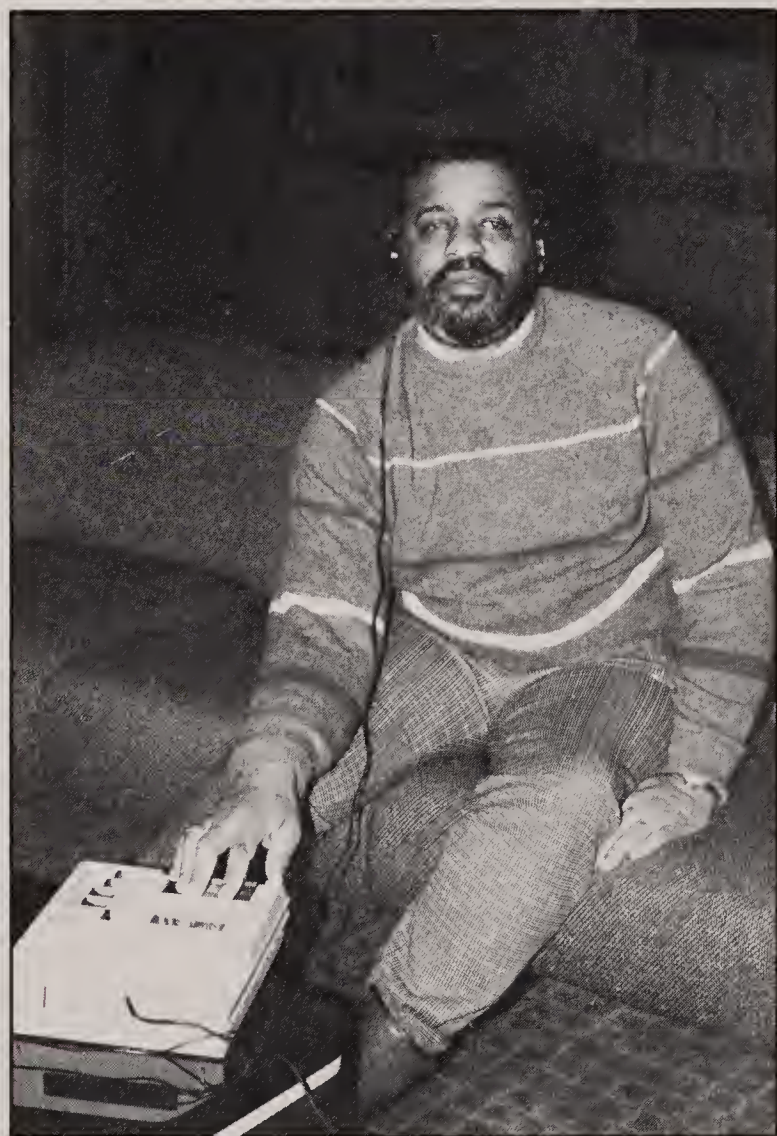
**24 Hour Toll-Free
Message Recording Service**

1-800-342-3688



**The University of the
State of New York
The State Education Department**

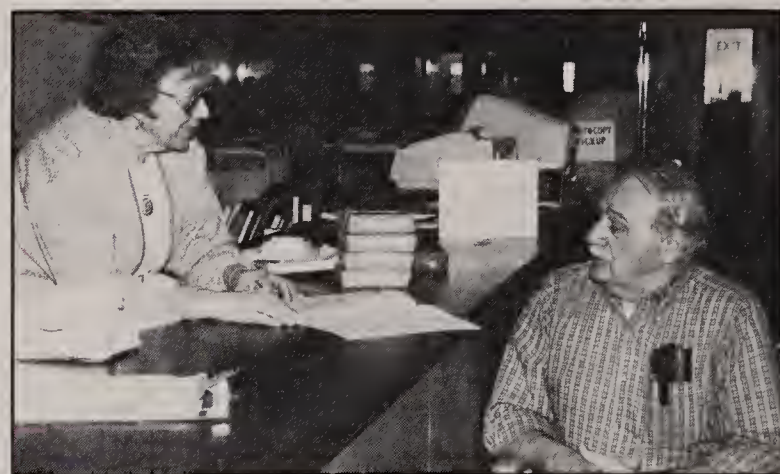
Do you know someone who has difficulty reading print? Did you know that the benefits and enjoyment of reading are available to people who have visual or physical impairments — whether temporary or permanent? A wide variety of books and magazines on audio cassettes, on records, or in braille can be borrowed free by mail from the New York State Library for the Blind and Visually Handicapped in Albany, New York.



Who Is Eligible

Adults and children who can't easily use printed books because of:

- A visual impairment
- A physical handicap (such as an inability to hold a book)
- A reading disability of a physical origin (such as dyslexia)
or
- Blindness



Free recorded and braille books, magazines, and playback equipment are offered for loan to eligible readers living in upstate New York. The library has over 30,000 titles, including novels, factual books on many subjects, and children's books. Institutions and schools may also register for service.

Services

- Loan of: books & magazines on cassette or phonograph record, braille books & print/braille books, cassette & record players, equipment accessories for specific disabilities.
- Free catalogs for book selection
- Postage free return of books
- Staff assistance for information and book selection
- Quarterly newsletter
- Automated news service via telephone: 800-342-3111



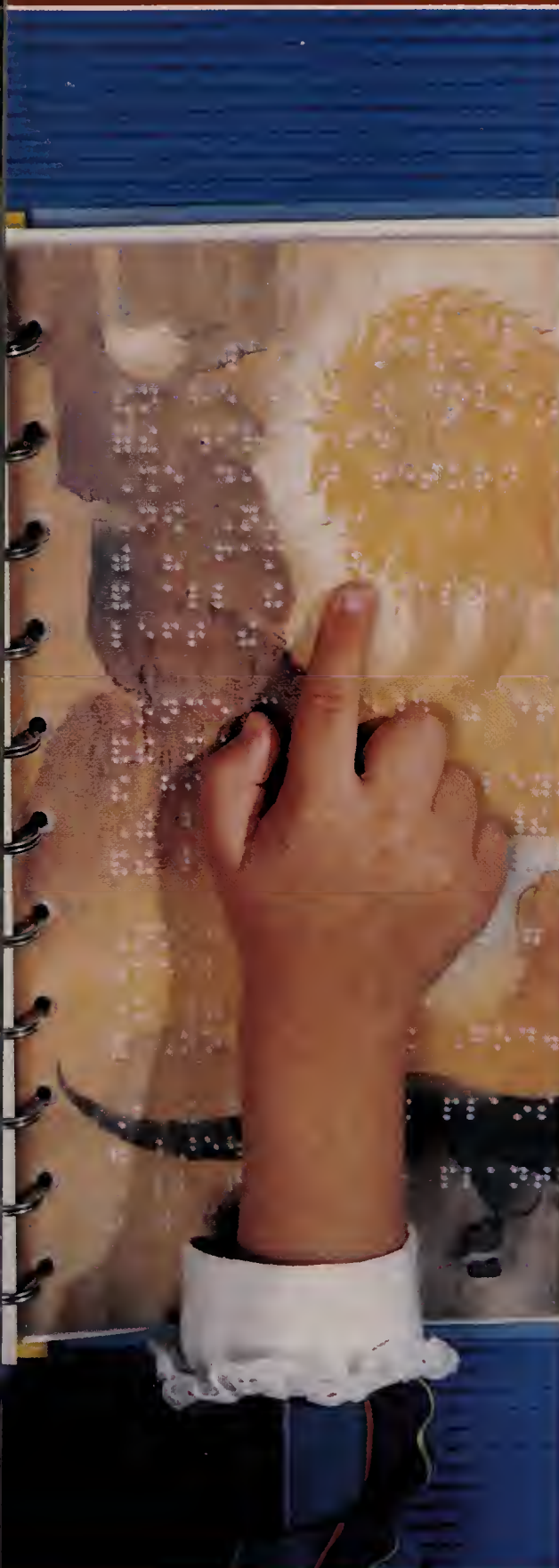
How To Apply

You can get an application for free service from the New York State Library for the Blind and Visually Handicapped, Cultural Education Center, Empire State Plaza, Albany,

NY 12230, telephone 518-474-5935, (toll free message service 800-342-3688). Or ask your public library for assistance.



There's more than one way to read a book



Free Library Service for Blind and Physically Handicapped People

BOOKS TALK . . . on cassettes and discs . . . to blind and physically handicapped individuals. All books and playback equipment may be borrowed at no charge.

The Library of Congress free reading program for visually and physically handicapped individuals has many books and magazines — recorded and brailled. These include Gothic and romantic novels, books on travel, history, and religion, as well as classics, bestsellers, mysteries, biographies, and how-to books.

For a sampling of what is already in the program, play this record on your phonograph.

If you know someone who can use the Library of Congress free reading program — someone temporarily or permanently unable to read standard print — you can help that person fill leisure hours, continue studies, or just

keep in touch with the world by applying for free reading materials.

Our talking books — recordings on discs and cassettes — cannot be bought at the local bookstore. They are available on loan with special playback equipment to eligible handicapped people. Any U.S. citizen or resident who cannot hold a book or read standard print can apply to borrow these materials. The books, magazines, and playback equipment are mailed postage-free directly to the borrower.

Talking books may be ordered from one of 160 cooperating libraries throughout the nation. Free bimonthly magazines, *Talking Book Topics* and *Braille Book Review*, announce new books to program participants.

To get more information about this free service, fill out and mail the attached card or call the library listed on this brochure.

33 1/3 RP

33 1/3 RP

NEW YORK, N.Y. 10001 FOR THE BLIND AND
VISUALLY HANDICAPPED
CULTURAL EDUCATION CENTER
EMPIRE STATE PLAZA
ALBANY, N.Y. 12230

Place
Postage
Stamp
Here



To play, fold front cover underneath back cover and place entire booklet on phonograph.

BOOKS TALK . . . on cassettes and discs . . . to blind and physically handicapped individuals. All books and playback equipment may be borrowed at no charge.

The Library of Congress free reading program for visually and physically handicapped individuals has many books and magazines — recorded and brailled. These include Gothic and romantic novels, books on travel, history, and religion, as well as classics, bestsellers, mysteries, biographies, and how-to books.

For a sampling of what is already in the program, play this record on your phonograph.

If you know someone who can use the Library of Congress free reading program — someone temporarily or permanently unable to read standard print — you can help that person fill leisure hours, continue studies, or just

keep in touch with the world by applying for free reading materials.

Our talking books — recordings on discs and cassettes — cannot be bought at the local bookstore. They are available on loan with special playback equipment to eligible handicapped people. Any U.S. citizen or resident who cannot hold a book or read standard print can apply to borrow these materials. The books, magazines, and playback equipment are mailed postage-free directly to the borrower.

Talking books may be ordered from one of 160 cooperating libraries throughout the nation. Free bimonthly magazines, *Talking Book Topics* and *Braille Book Review*, announce new books to program participants.

To get more information about this free service, fill out and mail the attached card or call the library listed on this brochure.

To play, fold front cover underneath back cover and place entire booklet on phonograph.

33 1/3 RPM



33 1/3 RPM

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

- ☐ I would like to receive an application for free library service.
- ☐ I am interested in more information about your free library service.

NEW YORK LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND AND
VISUALLY HANDICAPPED
CULTURAL EDUCATION CENTER
EMPIRE STATE PLAZA
ALBANY, N.Y. 12230

NEW YORK LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND AND
VISUALLY HANDICAPPED
CULTURAL EDUCATION CENTER
EMPIRE STATE PLAZA
ALBANY, N.Y. 12230

Place
Postage
Stamp
Here



*National Library Service
for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped*

The Library of Congress

HV1731

N42 Special library services.

C897

C.3

DATE DUE		

AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR THE BLIND
15 WEST 16th STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10011

New York State Library

A 4.5 million item RESEARCH LIBRARY for the government and people of the State. This includes the fifth largest law library in New York State, a medical library, and collections strong in history, political science, education, management, and social sciences. Manuscript and special collections include maps, diaries, papers and posters. Materials are loaned each day through the New York State Interlibrary Loan (NYSILL) system. Library hours 9 a.m.–5 p.m., Monday–Friday.

LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT bureaus for the planning, coordination, and development of library services. Staff specialists work with public officials, librarians, and governing authorities of New York's 7,700 libraries, provide technical assistance, publish data on libraries, and administer some \$43 million in State and Federal aid for improvement of library services. Office hours 8 a.m.–5 p.m., Monday–Friday.

